agency for science and higher education

REPORT
OF THE EXPERT PANEL
ON THE
RE-ACCREDITATION OF
VIROVITICA COLLEGE

Date of site visit: 7 – 8 May 2019

September 2019

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Agency for Science and Higher Education (the Agency) is an independent legal entity with public authority, registered in the court register, and a full member of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) and European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

All public and private higher education institutions are subject to re-accreditation, which is conducted in five-year cycles by the Agency, in accordance with the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (Official Gazette 45/09) and subordinate regulations, and by following *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG) and good international practice in quality assurance of higher education and science.

The Agency's Accreditation Council appointed an independent Expert Panel for the evaluation of the Virovitica College.

Members of the Expert Panel:
- Senior lecturer Marina Gregorić, Ph.D., Polytechnic of Međimurje in Čakovec, Republic of Croatia, Panel chair, (current employer University North, Koprivnica, Croatia),
- Prof. Dr.-Ing. Faouzi Derbel, Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology, Leipzig University of Applied Sciences, Federal Republic of Germany,
- Prof. Dr. Saskia Harkema, NCOI University of Applied Sciences, Kingdom of the Netherlands,
- Assoc. Prof. Alen Jakupović, Ph.D., Polytechnic of Rijeka, Republic of Croatia,
- Matea Ivanković, student, Bjelovar University of Applied Sciences, Republic of Croatia.

During the site visit, the Expert Panel held meetings with the following stakeholders:
- Management,
- Students,
- Heads of Quality Management Centre, Student Standard Centre, Centre for Library and Publishing Activity, ICT Support Centre,
- Full-time teaching staff,
- External lecturers,
- Teaching Assistants,
- Alumni,
- Representatives of the business sector, potential employers.

The Expert Panel members had a tour of the work facilities, Research and Development Centre, Student Dormitory Virovitica, library, IT classrooms, student administration office and classrooms, and attended sample lectures. The Expert Panel members also visited the Entrepreneurial Incubator in which students do student practice.

In accordance with the site visit protocol, the Expert Panel examined the available additional documents and study programme descriptions (learning outcomes).

The Expert Panel drafted this Report on the re-accreditation of Virovitica College on the basis of Virovitica College self-evaluation report, other relevant documents and site visit.

The Report contains the following elements:
• Short description of the evaluated higher education institution,
• Brief analysis of the institutional advantages and disadvantages,
• List of institutional good practices,
• Analysis of each assessment area, recommendations for improvement and quality grade for each assessment area,
• Detailed analysis of each standard, recommendations for improvement and quality grade for each standard,
• Appendices (quality assessment summary by each assessment area and standard, and site visit protocol),
• Summary.

In the analysis of the documentation, site visit to the Virovitica College and writing of the Report, the Expert Panel was supported by:
• Maja Šegvić, coordinator, ASHE,
• Katarina Šimić Jagunić, assistant coordinator, ASHE,
• Lida Lamza, interpreter at the site visit, ASHE,
• Ivana Rončević, translator of the Report, ASHE.

On the basis of the re-accreditation procedure conducted, and with the prior opinion of the Accreditation Council, the Agency issues a following accreditation recommendation to the Minister for Higher Education and Science:
1. **issuance of a confirmation on compliance with the requirements** for performing the activities, or parts of the activities
2. **denial of license** for performing the activities, or parts of the activities
3. **issuance of a letter of expectation** with the deadline for resolving deficiencies of up to three years. A letter of expectation can include the suspension of student enrolment within a set period.

The accreditation recommendation also includes a quality grade of a higher education institution, and recommendations for quality improvement.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

NAME OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Virovitica College

ADDRESS: Ulica Matije Gupca 78, 33000 Virovitica

DEAN: Oliver Jukić, Ph.D., College Professor

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:
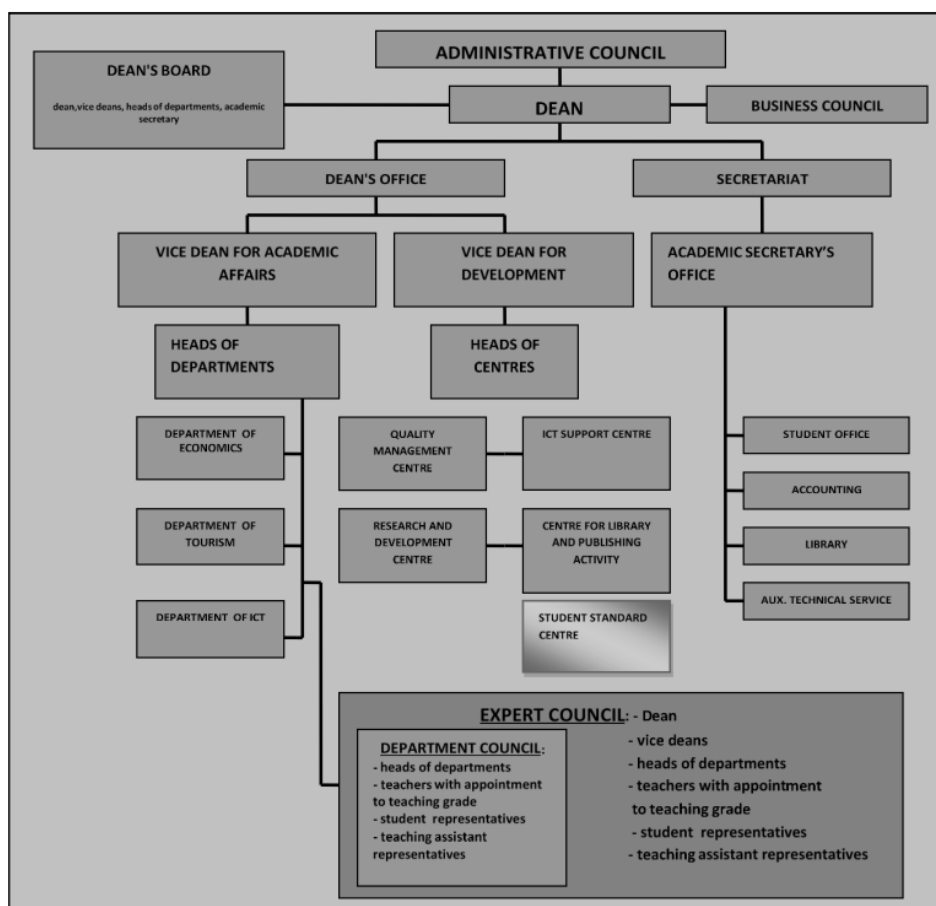
STUDY PROGRAMMES:
- Undergraduate professional study programme Management; specialisations in Informatics Management and Management in Rural Tourism,
- Undergraduate professional study programme Entrepreneurship; specialisations in Entrepreneurship of Services and Rural Entrepreneurship,

- Undergraduate professional study programme Computer Science; specialisation in Software Engineering,
- Undergraduate professional study programme Electrical Engineering; specialisation in Telecommunications and Information Technology,
- Specialist Graduate Professional Study Programme Management; specialisations in Management of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and Destination Management.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS:
Full-time students: 392 (319 on Undergraduate Professional Study Programmes and 73 on Specialist Graduate Professional Study Programme)
Part-time students: 21 (0 on Undergraduate Professional Study Programmes and 21 on Specialist Graduate Professional Study Programme)

NUMBER OF TEACHERS:
15 full-time teachers and 2 cumulative employment (Data from the Self-evaluation Report, Table 4.1.b.)
6 teaching assistants

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

Virovitica College was founded by the Regulation of the Government of the Republic of Croatia in 2007. Activity of Virovitica College is carried out in the following organisational units: departments, the Dean's office, secretariat and centres of Virovitica College. Virovitica College delivers five study programmes on undergraduate and graduate level. Currently there are 31 employees, 21 of whom have been appointed to associate and teaching grades. With the aim of raising student standard, in 2013 student restaurant was completed and in 2017 Student Dormitory with 108 beds was opened. Since its foundation, Virovitica College has actively cooperated with the economy, public companies and local and regional self-government.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. Learning facilities, students' services and dormitory;
2. Relationship with Business Incubator and cooperation with Blue Factory;
3. Business sector – support and cooperation (students' employment);
4. Investment in assistants – support and the assistant's engagement;
5. PhD funding and support in publishing for PhDs.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. High dropout rate;
2. Workload (distribution) of teaching staff;
3. The alignments and coherence within the study programmes;
4. Lack of competent teachers with the electrical engineering background;
5. Lack of labs in electrical engineering study programmes;
6. Not enough local and international projects;
7. Not enough national and international publications;
8. Lifelong learning programs – not implemented;
9. Lack of foreign language courses in the study programmes.

LIST OF INSTITUTIONAL GOOD PRACTICES

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. Students involved in Incubators;
2. Student services;
3. Students involved in the Development and Research Centre;
4. Collaboration with business;
5. Employment of teaching assistants.

ANALYSIS OF EACH ASSESSMENT AREA, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND QUALITY GRADE FOR EACH ASSESSMENT AREA

I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution

Analysis

Internal quality assurance and the social role of the HEI are divided in 6 major areas covering different quality assurance and social role factors that were evaluated. The HEI has developed their own quality assurance system due to the dissatisfaction with ISO standards and procedures from the past. In order to improve the quality assurance system HEI introduced Handbook of the Quality Management System. The QMS is a part of the HEI Strategy for the period from 2018 – 2022 and it includes Strategic goal focusing on "Maintenance and advancement of the quality management system through the activities of the QMS, conducting internal audits, evaluation of the management system, self-analysis and third-party audits". Human resources management policies are part of QMS too. It is evident that HEI aims to achieve high quality standards but some of the prescribed standards are not exercised in practice. According to QMS the procedure of collecting and analysing data is standardised, but the results and the data collected is not utilised sufficiently. During conducted interviews with stakeholders it is evident that not all recommendations from previous evaluation have been realised. Importance should be given to improve language skills of academic staff in order to offer lectures in English for Erasmus students, participate in Erasmus programs and publish more internationally. The higher education institution supports academic integrity and freedom, upholds the ethical standards and preserves academic integrity and freedom. The HEI effectively uses mechanisms for preventing unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination but not applying the plagiarism check up on student's graduation thesis, seminars and other written work. Information on study programmes and other activities of the HEI is publicly available in Croatian and English language. The HEI informs stakeholders via web sites and other reporting tools, but from the meeting with different stakeholder groups it is evident that they are not acquainted fully with the following: the pass rates, current criteria for creation of syllabuses, learning outcomes, Bloom's taxonomy as well as the methods of evaluation for each learning outcome, etc. External lecturers are not involved continuously and sufficiently in development of programs and the HEI corporate culture creation. The HEI understands the importance of its social roles and contributes to the development of economy and development of the local community in many ways and it is evaluated as a high-quality involvement. The HEI contributes to the development of the local community and local civil society by participating in the work of the Local Partnership for Employment of Virovitica Podravina County through appointed members. The HEI contributes to the foundations of the academic profession and accountability of

teachers for the development of the HEI and the local community. There is no development and revision of lifelong learning programmes due to management strategic decision.

Recommendations for improvement
1. Involve external lecturers in periodical meetings with internal lectures and management when it comes to vital study program changes, creation of new programs and trainings/workshops related to creation of syllabuses, proper adaptation of learning outcomes, Bloom's taxonomy, standards of seminars, marketing plans as well as creation and execution of exams in terms of assessment of relevant learning outcomes.
2. Collected data from surveys and other collecting methods should be carefully analysed and used as a base of improvements of current study programs (exams, languages, elective courses, etc.) and student practice improvements.
3. To form the team of several members under Quality Management Centre.
4. Academic autonomy should be more precisely implemented to avoid any political influence on academic integrity.
5. Continue, follow up and improve the recommendations partially realised as per previous but also this reaccreditation.
6. Improve language skills of employees.
7. Plagiarism control should be implemented.
8. The approach to communication should be more active towards all stakeholders.
9. Introduce and develop various lifelong learning programs in order to contribute to the local society, to generate income and contribute to the profit scheme.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

II. Study programmes

Analysis
All study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the HEI. The HEI actively aligns its study programmes with the labour market demands.

All Undergraduate professional study programmes correspond to the level 6 of the Croatian Qualifications Framework. Specialist graduate professional study programme correspond to the level 7 of the Croatian Qualifications Framework. Some learning outcomes of the study programme must be changed so that they are measurable. The generic learning outcome for the category "Learning skills" (according to the Dublin Descriptors) was not explicitly stated in any of the study programmes.

The HEI prescribed that every teacher must perform constructive alignment of the learning outcomes at the level of courses before the beginning of an academic year. It is necessary to develop a system of evaluation that will prevent the successful completion of a course without achieving all learning outcomes (at least at the minimal level).

The HEI uses feedback from different stakeholders (students, employers, professional organisations and alumni) in the process of development or revision of study programmes. External associates are insufficiently involved.

The HEI has just started with the process of determining the compliance of the ECTS credits and the actual student workload. It is necessary to develop the procedure for reconciling ECTS credits with the actual student workload.

The internship is mandatory to all the study programmes of the HEI. It is necessary to develop the procedure for gathering and analysing feedback from students and employers on the quality of internship.

Recommendations for improvement

1. Include the analysis of competencies helping students find employment in the employability analysis.
2. Involve the generic learning outcomes categorized as "Learning skills" according to the Dublin Descriptors in all study programmes.
3. A successfully passed course means that a student has reached at least a minimum level of all prescribed learning outcomes for the course. It is proposed to establish a threshold for each learning outcome, and by passing that threshold the student will be considered to have reached the minimum of that learning outcome. It is proposed to allow the assessment of the learning outcomes which have not been achieved in exams. It is proposed that the course teacher keeps a record of the level of student's achievement of the course learning outcomes through various assessments. Using this record, the teacher will know which learning outcomes a student has achieved, and which he/she has not, and modify their teaching/assessment activities accordingly.
4. Actively involve external associates in the study programme revisions.
5. Develop the procedure for reconciling ECTS credits with the actual student workload, which will involve other stakeholders in the teaching activity along with the students.
6. Develop the procedure for gathering and analysing feedback from students and employers on the quality of internship.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

III. Teaching process and student support

The criteria for admission to undergraduate and graduate studies are clear and available on the website and defined by the regulations. From a meeting with the administration and students it can be concluded that the criteria for enrolment or continuation of studies are consistently applied. At the meeting with the students, the possibility of admission of candidates with completed undergraduate professional study management (direction of IT management) to graduate study management without additional conditions has been identified. Students believe that this is not correct, because then the content of some courses is adapted to students who do not have sufficient pre-knowledge – the topics from undergraduate studies are being reprocessed.

Insufficient information is collected by way of survey, and students are not convinced that the survey is anonymous.

HEI should conduct in-depth analyses of the reasons behind student attrition; additional measures are needed for reducing the student attrition and increasing the pass rate.

Programme delivery and teaching methods applied ensure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. Various teaching methods are used in teaching, stimulating interactive and investigative learning, problem solving, and creative and critical thinking.

Evaluation methods for the defined learning outcomes are in line with the implemented teaching methods (e.g. written exams, seminars, project and homework assignments, essays, oral exams). However, as evidenced by one example of a midterm exam, the Panel concludes that grading criteria are not fully adequate, since they do not account for the entire learning outcome unit. The sample exam in question showed that students do not have to achieve all learning outcomes, but only score 50% at the exam to pass the course. It is necessary to develop a system of assessment that will prevent the passing of an exam unless all the learning outcomes are achieved, at least at the minimal level.

Mentors are available to undergraduate students, providing them with support to achieve their academic goals. Students are also provided with the Information package and Quick Start Guide. In addition, student practice mentors inquire about the interests of students and - according to their feedback - suggest possible placements, actively contributing to their career opportunities.

Through its ALUMNI Association and Career Development Committee, HEI informs prospective students about the possibilities of continuing education and/or employment upon graduation.

HEI's Counselling Centre provides students with support and help. Teaching and examination schedules are accommodating commuter and part-time students. Teaching methods and methods of examination are adjusted to students with health issues / disabilities.

Trainings are organised for teachers so they can adequately support vulnerable and under-represented groups.

HEI ensures accommodation, as well as scholarships from own funds, for students from vulnerable and under-represented groups.

Students have the opportunity to complete a part of their study or student internship abroad, through the Erasmus+ programme. At the meeting with students, the Panel learned that there are enough opportunities for outgoing mobility, but that the students are reluctant to take them, either out of fear of change or lack of interest. They are certain, however, that the introduction of additional language classes and reading materials in foreign languages could change this situation.

For international students, information on the enrolment and studying are available in English language on HEI's website. Incoming Erasmus+ students are almost exclusively from the neighbouring countries, speaking languages similar to Croatian, and having no problem with attending the classes in Croatian.

Recommendations for improvement

1. Candidates who have completed undergraduate professional study programme Management (field: Informatics Management) should take differential courses prior to the enrolment to the graduate study of Management (e.g. for Destination Management, introduce courses such as Introduction to Tourism, Selective Forms of Tourism, etc.) Analyse whether differential courses are also needed for the candidates who have completed other undergraduate studies.

2. Identify the cause of student attrition and implement measures to reduce it.

3. Motivate students to participate in Erasmus+ and CEEPUS mobility programmes. Increase the number of incoming students by increasing outgoing mobility of both teachers and students.

4. Introduce course materials in foreign languages, as a preparation for midterms and/or final exams, seminars and lectures that would be conducted in language other than Croatian. Inform the students on the availability of course materials / books in other languages.

5. Determine the actual language competencies of teachers, and the possibilities of carrying out courses in English.

6. The Panel believes that HEI should inform the students as much as possible on the possibilities of employment at the national level. The current practice regarding the employment at the local level is adequate.

7. Continue monitoring the needs of the labour market, regulate the enrolment quotas and development of new study programmes accordingly. Additionally, HEI should employ more teaching staff in electrical engineering and set up the laboratory for practical training needs.

Satisfactory level of quality

IV. Teaching and institutional capacities

Analysis

Teaching is at the heart of the Institution. Teachers we spoke to showed commitment to their work, the students and the Institution. During the meeting the Panel had with students, they voiced that teachers are seen as more than that – they are people they confide in and entrust to safeguard their educational progress. Student evaluations however also show that they are critical about the performance of teachers. The challenge is to balance this atmosphere within the Institution that allows having this close contact with students, while simultaneously creating a professional and academic ambiance. Noteworthy in this respect is that teachers do not seem to be very internationally oriented. They mostly come from the area and there is very little interaction and collaboration across borders. This may have to do with the fact that English is spoken rather poorly. This is a prerequisite for internationalization. Erasmus+ is only used in a very limited way to organize some occasional student exchange, but not for long term partnerships or transnational projects. Also, Life Long Learning is not really picked up by the Institution as an opportunity.

External Associates play an important role as a linking pin to the environment. The Associates the panel spoke to showed commitment and a genuine interest in creating opportunities for students. The challenge is to involve these Associates more intensively in the pedagogical process. They seemed not to have a clear view on the whole pedagogical process and are hardly involved in the supervision of graduates.

When it comes to research and the academic level of teachers and the Higher education institution, it is worth mentioning that the Institution supports teachers financially if they want to do a PhD and attend conferences. This is a very big plus point. It is however not very clear who qualifies to do so and if there is a clear policy or handbook defining the procedure and the criteria to assess whether someone can start up that trajectory. Teachers in general must be involved in research, but it was very clear that time for that is very limited. Teachers must be present every day and clock hours. This is not customary at other higher education institutions. Also, teacher assistants have a very heavy workload and it is not clear how they can advance their career and become teacher and eventually do a PhD if they qualify.

Most of the teachers appear to be qualified to teach the courses they deliver but there is lack of the teachers in the electrical engineering field.

In terms of the infrastructure the Institution is located in a beautiful building which breathes a very pleasant atmosphere. Lecture rooms, conference rooms and other facilities looked very well kept and offer a good working space for meetings, lectures, or

any other pedagogical activities. The dorm is beautifully furnished and managed in order to create a place where students can feel at home and study and be involved in extracurricular activities.

Since this is a region with very high unemployment rate, it is important that the Institution also takes its role to contribute to regional development. Their Entrepreneurship program offers opportunities in this respect and this has resulted in at least 1 Incubator which was visited by the Panel. It now harbours a number of start-ups which seem to be quite successful. Blue Factory is one of them which has managed to enlarge its scope internationally and this is a good example of how via Incubators a development can be ignited and supported. The Panel was told that 3 other Incubators will appear.

In terms of financial management, there is transparency. The Institution however solely depends on governmental financial support, which is seen as risky by the Panel. It would be good to also secure funds via EU programs, projects, or sponsorships.

Recommendations for improvement
1. Invest in career development of teachers and teaching assistants by involving them more actively in research, creating an ambiance of academic practice and reflection.
2. Involve External Associates more actively in the pedagogical process. Create strong linkages between the HEI and the environment to ignite and support a process of knowledge circulation. Through the projects and internships that students do, they are not only contributing to the solution of problems but also developing knowledge and case studies. These can be fed back into the curriculum to keep it up-to-date and relevant to the working environment. In this way the connection between the HEI and its external environment is reinforced and the quality level of both the Institute and organizations in the region is improved and bettered.
3. Partner more actively with institutions in other regions and across borders.
4. Secure funds from other sources to not solely depend on governmental funding. For instance: EU funds, contract research and teaching, sponsorships etc.
5. Involve international Visiting Professors or Guest lecturers in the teaching programmes.
6. Organize a yearly Conference and/or Summer Academy for students. This is a good way to attract international lecturers and researchers.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

V. Professional and/or scientific activity

Analysis

Teachers and associates at the HEI published papers and teaching materials. Most of them are categorized as professional. The mentioned number of published papers is very low and not appropriate for this kind of institution. The publication of teaching book in the field of electrical engineering has to be appreciated since this study program is quite new. This shows the engagement of the teacher.

Based on the self-evaluation report publishing activities are planned at the beginning of each study year. This approach is on one side advantageous since it represents a commitment of teachers and associates. On the other side there is no information about dealing with spontaneous publications.

A transparent procedure for encouraging and funding publication activities is not available. The funding is rather based on "goodwill" of the dean.

The HEI shows in some fields a strong cooperation with local community and business people from the region in order to take into account the needs of the society, local community and labour market. The cooperation is based on their involvement as business councils and advisory boards.

During the interviews, a commitment of the business councils to the HEI and its development is noticed. The tourism and economic fields are strongly represented. The field of information and communications technologies is still under development.

It has been shown that the Business councils actively participate in the activities of the Virovitica College especially with regard to the adaptation of study programmes.

Besides this, the HEI maintains a good relationship to incubators in the region. The relationship is based on involvement of student in internships. In order to be able to establish start-ups the relationship should be more developed. In this context lectures and especially the assessment exams should be considered more deeply in order to prepare students for realistic scenarios.

The support of research and transfer of knowledge and technologies is described with activities of teaching staff by participating in different events, e. g. workshops, conferences as well as with expert opinions. The specificity of the transfer of knowledge is not well justified. Activities are generic and not detailed.

The HEI collaborates with professional organizations and public sector by means of projects as well as different activities such as the representation of Virovitica College in very important projects as well as individual activities of teachers.

Professional and scientific achievements of HEI have been recognized with different awards in different conferences for scientific and professional achievements as well as for consideration in best paper awards. The number of awards is not appropriate.

The HEI collaborates with economy and the local community and with higher education institutions by means of involvement in different projects especially in the field of Entrepreneurship. The number of projects and activities that show the recognition of the HEI activities can be seen as minimum.

The HEI is well-equipped with IT classrooms as well as with computers and workstations allowing students and teachers to carry out laboratory exercises and work with software and simulation tools. The R&D centre is equipped with appropriate workstations and a set of components allowing the development of embedded solutions. The surface of the visited research centre is too small and should be increased. Scientific and professional literature is available. The access to online database represents a good basis to get scientific papers in English. Students in undergraduate and graduate levels are involved in many projects. Students have been considered as co-authors which is very useful for them to develop scientific and didactic skills. On the other side only projects in the tourism field are mentioned. Students are involved in international competitions correlated to ERASMUS+. The HEI encourages the teaching staff with the organization and funding of an English language course.

During the interviews it can be concluded that the College recognizes and rewards employees for their achievements. A procedure showing rules and steps to be awarded in order to increase transparently in this approach is not available.

Recommendations for improvement

1. The institution should introduce a transparent procedure with defined and appropriate rules for rewarding professors and teaching staff for their achievements. Rules should be focussed on international publications.
2. The number of published papers especially with regard to professional ones should be improved. A transparent procedure encouraging publications should be defined and introduced.
3. The transfer of knowledge should be not only focussed on tourism but also extended to other fields. A procedure allowing monitoring and encouragement for transfer should be defined and introduced.
4. The membership in different international organizations is indeed useful but specific activities are not mentioned. Therefore, it is recommended to extend the activities in an international context.
5. The number of publications should be also improved.

Quality grade
Minimum level of quality

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF EACH STANDARD, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND QUALITY GRADE FOR EACH STANDARD

I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution

1.1. The higher education institution has established a functional internal quality assurance system.

Analysis

Internal quality assurance system includes and evaluates all activities of the higher education (study programmes, teaching process, student support, support to students from under-represented and vulnerable groups, learning resources, professional and/or scientific activity, etc.) and provides underlying documentation.

Virovitica College has developed their own quality assurance system due to the dissatisfaction with ISO standards and procedures from the past. In order to improve quality assurance system HEI introduced Handbook of the Quality Management System of Virovitica College. Internal Quality Management System (QMS) covers entire scope of activity of Virovitica College such as: Planning (vision, mission, objectives, policies), Organisation (HR), Supervision of processes, internal audits, satisfaction, achievements of objectives, appraisal of the system, Organisation of teaching and examinations, Delivery of teaching and examinations, Applied scientific and professional activity, Publishing activity, Students, Undergraduate dissertations, Mobility and interinstitutional collaboration, Student standard, Student office, Procurement and accounting, Library, Administration and IT support, Security and infrastructure. The quality assurance bodies of HEI are Quality Management Centre, Quality Assurance Unit and Head of Quality Management Centre of Virovitica College. QMS is also part of the Development Strategy of Virovitica College for the period 2018-2022. Beside Handbook of the QMS there are also Policies of the QMS, Ordinance on the QMS, Employment Plan and Work Instructions and procedures of the QMS.

The HEI has also established QMS Centre Council with a role of supervision of the activities of the Centre and it includes the student representative which is assessed positively by the panel of experts during the visit.

Internal audits are done 2 times a year which is another good example of the practice assessed by the panel of experts positively (as reported during the meeting with management and quality manager).

In order to support students from under-represented and vulnerable groups HEI has introduced following documents and procedures: Methodology for working with students having a form of dyslexia, The basis of first aid in the case of epileptic seizure

and other life-threatening emergencies, Realisation of religious and all other freedoms of students and employees of Virovitica College, Granting scholarships to students which can also include social criteria (beside excellence) and Receiving and processing students proposals.

Quality Management Centre consists of only one person who is in charge (only the head of the centre) which might not be good on the long term.

Internal quality assurance system seeks to involve all stakeholders of the higher education institution (students and external stakeholders – employers, alumni, representatives of professional organisations, civil society organisations and internal stakeholders).

From the documents and QMS and conducted interviews it is visible that HEI aims to achieve high quality standards but some practical solutions/implementation of the QMS in practice in relations to written standards are not matching. There is a gap in communication and involvement of students and ALUMNI as well as between external lecturers' involvement in creation of study programs such as; awareness of changes in requirements of preparation of syllabuses according to Bloom's taxonomy, learning outcomes, quality of marketing plans, quality of seminars and research papers done by students, quality of final thesis and exam creation (in terms of checking learning outcomes) etc. During the ALUMNI meeting, the students who are still studying were present and there were not enough ALUMNI (by definition – those students who graduated already/former students). ALUMNI representative was elected recently and was not aware of many regulations at HEI. During the meeting with external lecturers there was a rather small attendance; only 6 external lecturers attended the meeting. There is no practice adopted to invite external lecturers to meetings with internal staff and therefore there is a lack of information on the learning outcomes, study programs and there is no representative of the external lecturers who can attend meetings of professional council. External lecturers meet management occasionally on the principle of individual talks, but not in organised workshops or training meetings form. Consequently, there is a lack of quality information related to study program changes and required improvements provided to external lecturers (which has an impact on the quality of their syllabuses, seminars and exams). Most of the external lecturers present at the meeting were not mentors for graduation thesis; only one was, which is found as a weakness and should be significantly improved in the future. See recommendations below. Communication with professionals and institutions is seen as positive practice by HEI and it relates to QMS.

The higher education institution adopted a quality assurance policy which is a part of its strategic management and is achieved through the implementation of the strategy involving a period of at least five years.

The HEI adopted a QMS (Policies of the Quality Management System which is a part of Development Strategy of Virovitica College for the Period from 2018 – 2022 (five years).

The implementation of the strategy includes SWOT or similar analysis, strategic goals, programme contract goals (where applicable), operational plan, defined responsibilities for implementation, monitoring mechanisms and the report on its implementation.

The QMS is a part of Development Strategy of Virovitica College for the period from 2018 – 2022 and it includes Strategic goal focusing on "Maintenance and advancement of the quality management system through the activities of the QMS, conducting internal audits, evaluation of the management system, self-analysis and third-party audits". In chapter 4 of the Strategy the SWOT analysis is included. The Action Plan is created and adopted by the Strategy too. Action plan for previous and current year is analysed by the Expert Council and the Administrative Council of HEI.

The higher education institution systematically collects and analyses data on its processes, resources and results, and uses them to effectively manage and improve its activities, as well as for further development.

According to QMS the procedure of collecting and analysing data is standardised, but the results and the data collected is not utilised sufficiently and it should be significantly improved.

The employability analysis should include the analysis of competencies in order to help students find employment.

The number of students completing the survey is not clearly analysed. Students are not convinced of the anonymity of the survey. It is necessary to exclude the possibility of skipping questions in the survey. The HEI should collect additional information from student in order to improve the quality of courses. At the meeting with external lecturers, it was noticed that they are not familiar with the procedure of amendments to accredited study programmes. It can be concluded that data collection from external lecturers is missing. The HEI carried out a survey related to the harmonization of ECTS credits for the first time, and that, apart from the survey, it does not have a clearly prescribed procedure. This is also evident from the recommendation from the report on the carried-out survey proposing that the survey be modified and amended. The HEI has prepared the Evaluation Questionnaire on the Efficacy of Internship, which was completed once, and the response from the employers was weak. The HEI is planning to prepare an electronic version of the questionnaire which will be a mandatory annex of the Internship Report. It is not clear if the students are given the opportunity to evaluate employers hosting internship.

The higher education institution uses various methods for collecting data on quality (student surveys on the teaching quality, student satisfaction surveys, peer review, feedback from employers and/or associates, graduates etc.).

Information on processes, resources and results at HEI is collected in several ways; through the software solution of the QMS (includes also students satisfactory survey), by the Vice Dean for Development (collecting information from graduate students and employers), survey with Association ALUMNI (as per the Work instruction RU-08-01 Methodology for creation of survey on student employability). As in a previous standard there is a gap between set standards related to collection of data and the use of collected data and results. Theoretically, HEI has accomplished collection and use of various methods but there is no useful implementation of results regarding further improvements of work and quality. Students expressed their dissatisfaction with foreign languages choice; they require more foreign languages, they require practical training to be done without splitting in order to have continuation, but the suggestions of students are not applied, and management is not aware of it (as perceived from the interviews). Management claimed that they were occupied with preparation and introduction of new study programs with the aim to become Polytechnic and therefore they did not focus on content and quality improvements within the other (already existing) study programs.

In the process of the study programmes revisions and developments it was noticed that the external lecturers are not familiar with the procedure. Also, on the provided examples of the performed revisions it was noticed a lack of a clear revision justification. The members of expert panel noticed the example of study program revision where the major change was in number of hours per lectures and exercises, but no further changes in the content of the courses/study programs.

In collection of data from students the reports do not show the size of the sample which indicates that there is no information on the significance of the collected data. System of collection should be improved and show the numbers of students who participate in the assessment of lecturers, management and administration.

The higher education institution is committed to the development and implementation of human resources management policies (managerial, teaching, administrative resources), in accordance with professional principles and standards.

Human resources management policies are part of QMS of HEI which regulate appointment and (re)appointment into teaching grades. It is regulated by Work procedure. There is also the Work instruction document Realisation of the rights of employees which regulates rights of the employees, the Work instruction document Planning of participation at conferences and professional training which regulates the quantity and quality of conferences and trainings should employees participate in and the document that regulates employment of external associates, Work instruction

Planning of employment of external associates. At the end of the calendar year, the Administrative Council of HEI prepares an Employment Plan for the following year that has to be in compliance with HEI needs but also the dynamics regulated by Ministry.

Recommendations for improvement

1. Involve external lecturers in periodical meetings with internal lectures and management when it comes to vital study program changes, creation of new programs and trainings/workshops related to creation of syllabuses, proper adaptation of learning outcomes, Bloom's taxonomy, standards of seminars, marketing plans as well as creation and execution of exams in terms of assessment of relevant learning outcomes.

2. Collected data from surveys and other collecting methods should be carefully analysed and used as a base of improvements of current study programs (exams, languages, elective courses, etc.) and student practice improvements.

3. It is necessary to form the team of several members who will deal with QM under Quality Management Centre because now it only includes one person.

4. Academic autonomy should be more precisely organised and implemented to avoid any political influence on academic integrity.

REMARK: All recommendations related to improvement of introduction of different formal procedures and acts (specified in other standards) will also contribute to improvement of quality assurance system and its implementation to higher level and are included additionally to recommendations within the whole section 1.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

1.2. The higher education institution implements recommendations for quality improvement from previous evaluations.

Analysis
The higher education institution analysed the recommendations for improvement and undertakes activities based on previous internal and external evaluations
The HEI was under the process of reaccreditation by Agency for Science and Higher Education during March 2014 and on December 2014 the recommendations were given to HEI as per the Final Report of the Expert Panel on re-accreditation. According to the Review of the realisation of recommendation available at the Self-analysis of Virovitica College can be seen that most of the activities are realised except the following which

are partially realised: 2.2 Introduce entrance exams, 5.3 Develop partnerships with foreign institutions in relations to development of research activities and 6.5. Encourage development of language skills. Although the HEI stated that many recommendations are realised, the expert panel identified that some are not analysed and implemented sufficiently too. Therefore, each specific recommendation that should be improved and implemented properly is explained in each related standard.

During conducted interviews with management, employees and students it is evident that unfulfilled recommendations have not been realised and are influencing quality of the HEI performance as well as its competitive position in the education market in Republic of Croatia and EU.

Entry exams for students are not implemented if students come from HEI's undergraduate study programs to graduate study programs. At least difference exams should be introduced for major courses at Destination Management study program. Students should have enough knowledge in basics of tourism and selective forms of tourism, marketing in tourism, etc. During the meeting with students there was a complaint and comments from students about lower level of knowledge provided by those students, which makes it difficult for them to cope with the tasks and assignments. It leads to the practice that lecturers must lower the standards in order to assist students coming with less prior knowledge and they do not work with students from Tourism studies accordingly. Same applies to students when they get to work in teams with team members from other programs. Additionally, during the interview with management at the closing meeting, the dean said there was no need for the entry exam because the number of candidates for the graduate study was less than the quota. On one hand it is logical, but it has an impact on the quality of the students and the program.

Therefore, the recommendation is to introduce the formal motivational letter and interview instead of introducing entry exams in all study programs in order to maintain quality. Further on, the recommendation is to introduce differentiation exams for students entering from undergraduate study programs from non-compatible/related study programs to graduate study program focusing on core tourism courses. This would increase quality of the performance in the graduate study program courses (participation in workshops, students' assignments, team work, research activities, etc.).

The higher education institution analyses improvements and plans further development accordingly.
Quality improvement action plan is not implemented sufficiently and should be implemented according to previous and current re-accreditation recommendations (follow recommendation under each standard).

1. Continue, follow up and improve the recommendations partially realised as per previous but also this reaccreditation. Find all the recommendation under each specific point of this report. Most of the recommendations from previous reaccreditations are formalised but from the interviews and practical examples they are not applied in practice.

2. Improve language skills of employees especially since at least English should be fluently spoken by employees holding masters and doctoral degrees. They should be able to lecture classes in English for Erasmus students and publish research papers internationally in English language. Because of the low English knowledge level employees can't participate in Erasmus programs and this is endangering the further training, learning and improvement of staff. On the long term it could also have a bad impact on competitiveness of the HEI. Partnership with foreign institutions should be broadened and language skills are one of the major prerequisites for it. During the exit meeting with management was declared awareness about it. It was declared (by the dean) the strategic decision was not to focus on all recommendations. In the past 5 years HEI had enough time to adjust and improve in all recommendations from previous reaccreditation. It is necessary to follow up those and current recommendations.

3. Introduce the formal motivational letter and interview instead of introducing entry exams in order to maintain quality.

4. Introduce differentiation exams for entering to graduate study program.

Minimum grade of quality

1.3. The higher education institution supports academic integrity and freedom, prevents all types of unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination.

The higher education institution supports academic integrity and freedom, upholds the ethical standards and preserves academic integrity and freedom. The higher education institution effectively uses mechanisms for preventing unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination. The higher education institution carries out activities related to the sanctioning of unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination.
In order to support academic integrity and freedom HEI has established different Code of Ethics procedures and documents with the aim to fully fulfil standards of ethics. During the visit to HEI panel of experts has identified compliance with procedures with the evidence presented in the following cases; certain irregularities and low student's

assessment of one of the lecturers led to disciplinary action and contract ending, and plagiarism, cheating and falsification of results by 26 students was disciplined since 2013. The HEI does not tolerate unethical behaviour and any type of discrimination.

The system for managing conflicts and resolving irregularities is functional at all levels of the higher education institution.

The system for managing conflicts and resolving irregularities is functional at all levels of the HEI. In order to maintain quality, the HEI has introduced Codes of Ethics and established Ethics Committee. It consists of three members and their deputies; one member and deputy being representative of the teaching staff, one member and deputy representing the employees, and one member and deputy representative of the student body and nominated by the Students' Union. System as such is functional and enables HEI to resolve different problems that might occur within the institution.

The HEI has also appointed a person who in charge of dealing with complaints, its investigation and undertaking preventing measures when it comes to any type of harassment, mobbing, etc.

The work of employees of the higher education institution, its students and external stakeholders, is based on ethical standards in higher education.

According to documents related to this standard and information provided by conducting the interviews with management, employees and other stakeholders it is evident that HEI ensures ethical code of conduct towards all groups of stakeholders.

The higher education institution systematically addresses issues of academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, falsifying results, etc.).

Regarding above standard, it has been discovered that HEI is not applying the plagiarism check up on student's graduation thesis, seminars and other written work. The analysed papers (seminars, marketing plans and some thesis) were of very low quality. In the Self-evaluation document is written that the HEI has secured funding of software for plagiarism detection in its Financial Plan for 2019, but so far, the software is not yet purchased. It has been assessed as a negative especially if the funds were secured for 2019.

Recommendations for improvement
1. In order to secure academic integrity and quality of education it is necessary to purchase plagiarism software and implement it in checking seminars, research papers, graduation thesis and marketing plans done by students. Plagiarism control should be implemented.

2. Other elements are incorporated satisfactory. Therefore, it is advisory to continue with good practice.

Satisfactory level of quality

1.4. The higher education institution ensures the availability of information on important aspects of its activities (teaching, professional and/or scientific and social role).

Analysis
Information on study programmes and other activities of the higher education institution is publicly available in Croatian and at least one world language.
Information on study programmes and other activities of the HEI is publicly available in Croatian and English language. Updated information on the study programmes and Learning outcomes at the level of the study programmes are available on the following websites in Croatian language:
https://vsmti.hr/studijski-programi/preddiplomski-studij/
https://vsmti.hr/studijski-programi/diplomski-studij/
Study programs available in English language are available on the following link:
https://vsmti.hr/en/study-programs/
Admission criteria in Croatian language are available at:
https://vsmti.hr/category/upisi20182019/
https://vsmti.hr/specijalisticki-diplomski-strucni-studij-menadzment/
Additionally, the HEI informs students about enrolment and study possibilities in English language: https://vsmti.hr/en/international-students/application-procedure/

The higher education institution informs stakeholders on the admission criteria, enrolment quotas, study programmes, learning outcomes and qualifications, forms of support available to students.
The HEI informs stakeholders via web sites and other reporting tools, but from the meeting with different stakeholder groups it is evident that they are not acquainted fully with the following: the pass rates, current criteria for creation of syllabuses, learning outcomes, Bloom's taxonomy as well as the methods of evaluation for each learning outcome, etc.

Information on the social role of the higher education institution is made available to stakeholders.
Information on the social role of the HEI is made available to stakeholders via web sites, local media and participation in the projects important for local community

development. The HEI has adopted a good practice of active involvement and collaboration with local community, business and social environment. As per self-evaluation report there has been a significant number of evidences of good practices when it comes to informing stakeholders.

In February 2018, an agreement on support and media coverage was made with Information Centre Virovitica, according to which all news and information on the activities of Virovitica College and related events, public lectures, study programmes, calls for application and all other activities considered to be of public interest is reported on a weekly basis. In collaboration with Information Centre Virovitica, Facebook campaigns in form of paid advertisements with news which is of high importance in the period before enrolment of secondary school graduates and prior to them making a choice on the desired study programme is periodically agreed.

Some relevant evidence about communication activities are:

Documentation on promotional campaign, Promotional materials of Virovitica College and Student Dormitory Virovitica, Documentation from Open Doors Days of Virovitica College and Student Dormitory Virovitica.

The higher education institution informs stakeholders about other indicators (e.g. pass rate analyses, graduate employment, drop-out rates, outcomes of previous evaluations, etc.).

In self-evaluation report of the HEI the focus was on information directed to promotional activities of the HEI in recent years through various media. Regarding promotion expert panel considers the efforts of the HEI as a good practice and the HEI should continue the same practices. When it comes to information to stakeholders about other crucial KPI (key performance indicators) as well as qualitative indicators such as pass rate analyses, graduate employment of students, drop-out-rates, outcomes of previous evaluations, etc.) none of them is explained in self-evaluation report. The HEI lacks systematically conducted informing practices toward stakeholders. From the interviews and meetings with different stakeholders (external lecturers, business sector, students, ALUMNI) the panel of experts identified that most of the stakeholder are not aware of important indicators and activities of the HEI. One of the very important observation aspects is related to awareness of external lecturers about procedures related to study programs especially about needs for improvements, syllabus development, improvement possibilities of exams structure, business and marketing planning standards, etc. External lecturers are not involved continuously and sufficiently in development of programs and the HEI corporate culture creation. The regular meetings with external lecturers are not organised neither they are invited to all faculty members meetings. External lecturers are consulted occasionally only, based on the individual informal meetings with a dean or vice dean.

1. The HEI should plan, organise and implement communication standards covering pass rate analyses, graduate employment, drop-out rates, outcomes of previous evaluations and other relevant key information and discuss it with external lecturers. They should also systematically address the same towards other stakeholders in order to achieve a high level of transparency of information but also to enable stakeholders to participate in suggestions for improvements of the HEI performance.

2. The approach to communication should be more active towards all stakeholders.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

1.5. The higher education institution understands and encourages the development of its social role.

Analysis
The higher education institution contributes to the development of economy (economic and technological mission of the higher education institution).
It is evident that the HEI contributes to the development of economy in many ways. The HEI has established the Business Councils (Business Council for Tourism, Business Council for Economics, and Business Council for Information and Communication Technology). The HEI is granting scholarships to the best students, contributes to their employment in economic sector in the region but also in other parts of Croatia. In addition, the HEI participate in councils and managing boards of individual institutions and business entities. The HEI contributes to the development of the local community and local civil society by participating in the work of the Local Partnership for Employment of Virovitica Podravina County through appointed members too.
The HEI participated in different projects in cooperation with the economic and local community as seen in their self-evaluation report and discussed during the interviews with the management and staff. The information provided indicates to the high level of involvement and motivation of HEI in support and contribution to development of its economic environment.

The higher education institution contributes to the development of the civil society and democracy (civil role).
The HEI contributes to the development of the civil society and democracy by allowing the use of its premises and infrastructure to local community. Different trainings, workshops and meetings are held in the HEI premises. One of the good practise examples is the organization of Winter School of Informatics in cooperation with the

Association DIV (Information Society Virovitica). The Winter School of Informatics was held at Virovitica College premises during winter school holidays, and it consisted of two-day mBot and MIT App Inventor workshops for students in their first and second grades of secondary school (information available in SER document and confirmed during the meeting with management and employees). Additionally, teachers and students participate in voluntary blood donations and charitable sporting events. The HEI is generally well adjusted to society, well respected and recognized as well as integrated in civil society.

The higher education institution contributes to the development of the local community.
It has been evident that the HEI contributes continuously to the development of the local community. One of the main projects, the project "RUPO - Strengthening of Rural Entrepreneurship", teachers of Virovitica College in cooperation with the Regional Development Agency of Virovitica Podravina Country provide education for micro, small and medium enterprises in the field of accounting and financial management, the field of application of new IT solutions, and the field of business development through innovations and thus further encourage cooperation with the local community. Also, through the project "Education for Small Entrepreneurs in Rural Tourism" Virovitica College has proactively participated in promotion of development of entrepreneurship in tourism, which will consequently contribute to both development of the local community, and development of the entire tourism and economy of Virovitica Podravina County. The expert panel sees the involvement of the HEI and its impact on the local community as very positive and aims to encourage the continuation of such practices.

The higher education institution contributes to the foundations of the academic profession and the accountability of teachers for the development of the higher education institution and the local community.
The HEI contributes to the foundations of the academic profession and accountability of teachers for the development of the HEI and the local community. Some of the evidence are the cooperation of the HEI with the economic and public sector that can be demonstrated through participation in the organisation of professional lectures and round tables within the International Entrepreneurship, Crafts and Agriculture Fair 'Viroexpo', which is held in Virovitica every year.
By participating in such programs and similar projects, the HEI continues developing the needs of the higher education institution and the local community. A contributing factor for this is the encouragement of the teachers to continual professional and scientific training in a way that the postgraduate doctoral studies, conferences and symposiums in Croatia and abroad, as well as publishing activities of teachers (textbooks, course materials, manuals) are funded by HEI. Although the total publishing scope of all academic staff could be improved and enlarged (as recommended in standard 5) the

potential, the effort and enthusiasm of lecturers is highly appreciated by panel of experts. The load of lecturers (high number of norm-hours, committees, other duties) might be an obstacle in relations to further growth and development of academic role, reputation and accountability, but the management and employees convinced panel of expert in their strong commitment and the pursuit of continuous improvement, thereby contributing to the development of institutional knowledge and competences.

Recommendations for improvement

1. To continue with strong involvement and participation as well as contribution to the social role, improving and contributing to economic and civil society as well as to maintain and increase the academic accountability of staff and the HEI.

Quality grade
High level of quality

1.6. Lifelong learning programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the strategic goals and the mission of the higher education institution, and social needs.

Analysis

There is evidence that general goals of the lifelong learning programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution. There is evidence that general goals of the lifelong learning programmes are in line with social needs.

Lifelong learning programs are not implemented, and management did not include it in the strategy. From the interview with the management it is confirmed that it is a strategic decision not to get involved in those programs. The development and implementation of lifelong learning programmes were not the primary objective of Virovitica College in the previous period, primarily due to limited human and financial resources. As per self-evaluation report, the previous development period of Virovitica College, until 2018, the focus was on:

a) development of new study programmes (Undergraduate Professional Study Programmes of Entrepreneurship; Management – main field Management in Rural Tourism; Computer Science, and Electrical Engineering and Specialist Graduate Professional Study Programme of Management) b) development of student standard (opening of the new building of student restaurant and cafe, and construction of the Student Dormitory) c) improvement of international mobility d) human resource development (13 teachers with PhD or studying for their PhD) e) improvement of the infrastructure and material conditions required for the delivery of study programmes f) development of publishing activity g) cooperation with the economy h) improvement of

teaching in study programmes. However, the HEI has been granted licence for the implementation of the following lifelong learning programmes:

1. Curriculum and the syllabus for the training programme for the post of Office Coordinator ("Office manager" programme)
2. Seminar for training of tourist guides and branch managers.

Due to insufficient interest, these programmes were not implemented in the previous reporting period. In order to maintain and develop the concept of lifelong learning, Virovitica College has carried out the following activities:

- "RUPO - Strengthening of Rural Entrepreneurship" - the education of micro, small and medium entrepreneurs

- Education for Small Entrepreneurs in Rural Tourism - a short educational programme within the project of education for small and medium entrepreneurs in tourism

- developing website and e-learning platform for the needs of the Pannonian Wood Competence Centre

Revision and development of lifelong learning programmes is carried out systematically and on a regular basis.

There is no revision or development of lifelong learning programmes since management decided not to participate in lifelong learning programs as an economic activity of the HEI on the long term.

Recommendations for improvement:

1. Introduce and develop various lifelong learning programs in order to contribute to the local society, to generate income and contribute to profit scheme. In order to be more competitive, it is important to introduce educational entrepreneurship in the HEI as well as to ensure employability of attendees of the programs.

2. The HEI should research market needs in the society, analyse competitors and identify the lifelong learning programs to be developed and offered to the market. Such programs could involve different stakeholders to participate in creation and delivery; lecturers, business sector, partners, local community member, etc. The programs could be related to any of the study programs or other various sectors of economy and add value to the whole institution as a professional entity.

Quality grade
Minimum level of quality

2. Study programmes

2.1. The general objectives of all study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution and the demands of the labour market.

Analysis

There is evidence that general goals of all study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution.

The document "Work and Development Programme - Development Strategy of Virovitica College for 2018 - 2022" is published on the website: https://vsmti.hr/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Strategija-finalna-verzija.pdf.

A part of the mission stated in that document reads as follows: "The mission of Virovitica College is to educate professionals with prominent entrepreneurial spirit, ready for independent application of gained knowledge and competences which will enable them higher competitiveness on the labour market, as well as professional, academic and social mobility." One of the stated strategic goals is as follows: "Continuous improvement of the teaching process by improving, adapting and introducing new study programmes, in accordance with the development of science, technologies and the needs of the labour market...", which also results in Priority 1.1. "Enhancement, adaptation and implementation of new study programmes in accordance with the development of science, technologies and the needs of the labour market".

Descriptions of competencies a student will acquire during the study are published on the following websites:

https://vsmti.hr/studijski-programi/preddiplomski-studij/ https://vsmti.hr/studijski-programi/diplomski-studij/.

It can be concluded from the descriptions that the competencies support the stated part of the mission and the mentioned strategic goals of the HEI. It is especially understandable based on the competencies that describe that it will be possible to plan, compose, monitor, make, use, apply, create, access and analyse something and that it will be possible to manage something.

The higher education institution aligns the general objectives of study programmes with the needs of the labour market (at the local, regional and national level).

There is an employability analysis available for 2018 on the website https://vsmti.hr/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/ZAPO%C5%A0LJIVOST-ANALIZA-2018.pdf. The analysis shows that the student unemployment rate obtained by the survey is 22 % for 2018, 35% for 2017 and 46% for 2016. It also shows that 57% of the students agree that the obtained skills and knowledge helped them in finding employment, while 30% of the students don't. All this information indicates that there is

a need for a deeper analysis (for example, which competencies obtained are least helpful in finding employment) so the results could be used in the alignment of the study programmes with market needs.

The justification for delivering study programmes is provided and includes an analysis of resources of the higher education institution required for delivering the study programmes. Since the last re-accreditation, the HEI has revised two undergraduate professional study programmes according to the principles of the Croatian Qualifications Framework and it has launched a specialist graduate professional study programme and two undergraduate professional study programmes. All of them include justification analyses of the study programmes. This has shown that the HEI actively aligns its study programmes with the labour market demands and that it develops new study programmes.

If the higher education institution delivers study programmes leading to degrees in regulated professions, it accepts the recommendations of professional organisations that govern their licencing.
Not applicable.

Recommendations for improvement
1. Include the analysis of competencies helping students find employment in the employability analysis.

Quality grade
High level of quality

2.2. The intended learning outcomes at the level of study programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the level and profile of qualifications gained.

Analysis
The higher education institution has clearly defined the learning outcomes of the study programmes, and they are aligned with the mission and goals of the higher education institution.
Learning outcomes at the level of the study programmes are available on the following websites:
https://vsmti.hr/studijski-programi/preddiplomski-studij/
https://vsmti.hr/studijski-programi/diplomski-studij/

The higher education institution has defined learning outcomes for all their study programmes, and they are aligned with the mission and goals of the HEI which are stated in standard 2.1.

Undergraduate professional study programme in Management (fields: Informatics Management, Management in Rural Tourism)

The study programme has 28 learning outcomes. According to Bloom's Taxonomy the distribution of learning outcomes is as follows: there are no learning outcomes for the first level, the second level has nine learning outcomes, the third level has six learning outcomes, the fourth level has three learning outcomes, the fifth level has two learning outcomes and the sixth level has eight learning outcomes. All the learning outcomes are measurable and made from the student's point of view. According to the Dublin Descriptors, the study programme learning outcomes cover the first three categories (area-specific). The study programme has one generic learning outcome "LO13 To apply the skill of multicultural communication with business partners and users in Croatian, English and German" which falls into the category "Communication". The generic learning outcome for the category "Learning skills" was not explicitly stated.

The planned learning outcomes of the study programme correspond to the level 6 of the Croatian Qualifications Framework.

Undergraduate professional study programme in Entrepreneurship (fields: Rural Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship)

The study programme has 17 learning outcomes. The distribution of the learning outcomes according to Bloom's Taxonomy is as follows: the first level has no learning outcomes, the second level has five learning outcomes, the third level has five learning outcomes, the fourth level has no learning outcomes, the fifth level has two learning outcomes and the sixth level has five learning outcomes. All learning outcomes are measurable and are expressed from a student perspective. According to the Dublin Descriptors, the study programme learning outcomes cover the first three categories (area-specific). The study programme has one generic learning outcome "LO15 To apply the skill of multicultural communication with business partners and users in Croatian and English" which falls into the category "Communication". The generic learning outcome for the category "Learning skills" was not explicitly stated.

The planned learning outcomes of the study programme correspond to the level 6 of the Croatian Qualifications Framework.

Specialist graduate professional study programme in Management (fields: Destination Management; Management of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises)

The study programme has 20 learning outcomes. The distribution of the learning outcomes according to Bloom's Taxonomy is as follows: the first level has no learning outcomes, the second level has two learning outcomes, the third level has three learning

outcomes, the fourth level has one learning outcome, the fifth level has eight learning outcomes and the sixth level has six learning outcomes. According to the Dublin Descriptors, the study programme learning outcomes cover the first three categories (area-specific). The study programme has two generic learning outcomes "LO10 Determine appropriate communication techniques in a specific situation" and "LO20 To establish the basic characteristics of academic style and language of writing" which fall into the category "Communication". The generic learning outcome for the category "Learning skills" was not explicitly stated.

The planned learning outcomes of the study programme correspond to the level 7 of the Croatian Qualifications Framework.

Undergraduate professional study programme in Computer Science (field Software Engineering)

The study programme has 17 learning outcomes. The distribution of the learning outcomes according to Bloom's Taxonomy is the following: the first level has no learning outcomes, the second level has four learning outcomes, the third level has four learning outcomes, the fourth level has five learning outcomes, the fifth level has one learning outcome and the sixth level has three learning outcomes. All learning outcomes are measurable and are expressed from a student perspective. According to the Dublin Descriptors, the study programme learning outcomes cover the first three categories (area-specific). The study programme has one generic learning outcome "LO17 Communicate with associates and users of services in Croatian and English" which falls into the category "Communication". The generic learning outcome for the category "Learning skills" was not explicitly stated.

The planned learning outcomes of the study programme correspond to the level 6 of the Croatian Qualifications Framework.

Undergraduate professional study programme in Electrical Engineering (field: Telecommunications and Information Technology)

The study programme has 19 learning outcomes. Learning outcomes: "Know the 'classic' telecommunications network, mobile networks and wireless networks", "Use network monitoring tools and know the concepts and techniques in network management" and "Know the cloud computing paradigm" using an imprecise verb "know" that is not measurable. The distribution of the learning outcomes according to Bloom's Taxonomy is the following: the first level has no learning outcomes, the second level has eight learning outcomes, the third level has five learning outcomes, the fourth level has two learning outcomes, the fifth level has two learning outcomes and the sixth level has two learning outcomes. Apart from the above-mentioned immeasurable learning outcomes, the other learning outcomes are measurable and are expressed from a student perspective. According to the Dublin Descriptors, the study programme learning

outcomes cover the first three categories (area-specific). The study programme has a generic learning outcome "Communicate with associates and users of services in Croatian and English" which falls into the category "Communication". The generic learning outcome for the category "Learning skills" was not explicitly stated.

The planned learning outcomes of the study programme correspond to the level 6 of the Croatian Qualifications Framework.

T*he higher education institution checks and ensures that the learning outcomes at the level of courses are aligned with the learning outcomes at the programme level.*

The HEI adopted the Ordinance on the Procedure of Amendments to Accredited Study Programmes and the Procedure for Amendments to Accredited Study Programmes. It can be concluded based on the specific examples of the revisions made that the College has an effective mechanism for assessing and ensuring the alignment of the learning outcomes at the level of the study programme and the courses.

Learning outcomes achieved in the study programme are aligned with the CroQF and EQF level descriptors.

The College took part in the EU projects aimed at harmonisation with CroQF standards. Two study programmes are included in the projects: Undergraduate professional study programme in Management, main field Management in Rural Tourism and the Undergraduate professional study programme in Entrepreneurship, the field Entrepreneurship. The College currently participates in the EU project "Implementation of the CROQF in Professional Study Programmes of Computer Science".

In defining learning outcomes, the higher education institution acts in line with professional requirements and internationally recognized professional standards, ensuring that the programme is up to date.

The HEI regularly includes industry representatives in defining the study programmes learning outcomes, which means that it actively maintains the quality of the learning outcomes of their study programmes, when it comes to defining the learning outcomes and ensuring they are up to date. This also ensures that the learning outcomes clearly reflect competences.

The intended learning outcomes clearly reflect the competencies required for employment, continuing education or other individual/society needs.

Learning outcomes at the level of the study program largely reflects the competences needed in the labour market, continuing education or other needs. Identified imprecise learning outcomes needs to be expressed differently.

Recommendations for improvement

1. To revise learning outcomes that contain the immeasurable verb "know";

2. To language-edit the learning outcomes;

3. Undergraduate professional study programmes in Management and Entrepreneurship have many learning outcomes at the 5th and 6th level of Bloom's Taxonomy (manage, develop, assess, revise). The recommendation is to check whether students can achieve those learning outcomes at the undergraduate professional study programme.

4. To involve the generic learning outcomes categorized as "Learning skills" according to the Dublin Descriptors in all study programmes.

5. Undergraduate professional study programme in Electrical Engineering has many learning outcomes at the 2nd level of Bloom's Taxonomy (identify, interpret - the learning outcomes with this verb seem to be 2nd level). The recommendation is to transform some of these learning outcomes to at least the third level.

6. The assessment is based on the presented document "Description of Courses-Syllabuses" for the Study Programme Electrical Engineering with the main field Telecommunications and Information Technology. The document provides only courses of the first and second semesters. Course "Introduction to Computer Applications" and its learning outcomes, e. g. Windows, Excel, Word etc. are not appropriate for a bachelor study. The described learning outcomes are indeed useful but represent some basics and can be seen as further qualifications and not as a course for higher education. The course should be presented as elective course and replaced with another appropriate course for electrical engineering.

7. In the Study Programme Electrical Engineering, courses ICT English 1 and 2 are defined as core courses. Although English is very important, one course for ICT English should be enough. The second one can be introduced as an elective course and can be replaced with another course dealing with Soft Skills such as project management.

8. In the Study Programme Electrical Engineering, the learning outcomes of the course "Introduction to Technical systems" cover many technical applications. The focus of this course is not related to the topic of the field Telecommunications and Informatics. It should be revised to include topics related to information technology and telecommunications. Based on web site information regarding this study program, intended further courses in the following semesters are appropriate.

9. In the web site Principles of Electrical Engineering is mentioned as a core course in the first semester. In the printed translated version, the course is not referenced. Therefore, a comparison to the study program in Croatian should be carried out.

Satisfactory level of quality

2.3. The higher education institution provides evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes it delivers.

Analysis

The higher education institution ensures the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes it delivers.
The HEI prescribed that every teacher has to perform constructive alignment of the learning outcomes at the level of courses before the beginning of an academic year, which includes the alignment of the learning outcomes and teaching contents and the alignment of the learning outcomes and assessment methods.

The higher education institution continually revises and improves the teaching process on the basis of evidence on the achievement of the intended learning outcomes (for example, tests, seminar papers, presentations, etc.).
It can be concluded based on the available examples of the learning outcome revisions and the time-table and the teaching method revisions that the HEI is making revisions and improvements to the teaching process. These revisions are made in accordance with the Ordinance on the Procedure of Amendments to Accredited Study Programmes and the Procedure for Amendments to Accredited Study Programmes.
The provided exam samples have not shown that the achievement of individual learning outcomes is being assessed. Although it is clearly stated on a sample exam which learning outcomes are evaluated by that exam, the exam pass rate depended on the total number of points gained, without considering for which evaluated learning outcome were the points scored in the evaluation of learning outcomes. Therefore, it is possible that a student passes an exam but that he/she does not gain any points in the assessment of some course learning outcome.
The examples of internship reports have shown certain inconsistencies – some of them are written in the form of activity log, and others in the form of a seminar paper.

Recommendations for improvement
1. A successfully passed course means that a student has reached at least a minimum level of all prescribed learning outcomes for the course. It is proposed

to establish a threshold for each learning outcome, and by passing that threshold the student will be considered to have reached the minimum of that learning outcome. It is proposed to allow the assessment of the learning outcomes which have not been achieved in exams. It is proposed that the course teacher keeps a record of the level of student's achievement of the course learning outcomes through various assessments. Using this record, the teacher will know which learning outcomes a student has achieved, and which he/she has not, and modify their teaching/assessment activities accordingly.

2. The Expert Panel proposes a unification of internship reports. One of the recommended forms is an activity log stating the days and descriptions of activities a student performed during internship.

Quality grade
Minimum level of quality

2.4. The HEI uses feedback from students, employers, professional organisations and alumni in the procedures of planning, proposing and approving new programmes, and revising or closing the existing programmes.

Analysis
Development activities related to study programmes are carried out systematically and regularly, involving various stakeholders.
The HEI adopted the Ordinance on the Procedure of Amendments to Accredited Study Programmes and the Procedure for Amendments to Accredited Study Programmes. The examples of the revisions made have shown that the HEI carries out developmental activities related to study programmes. The HEI involves the Council of the HEI in the procedure of revising the study programmes, while students are involved through ALUMNI, and industry representatives are involved through the Business Council. At the meeting with external lecturers, it was noticed that they are not familiar with the procedure of amendments to accredited study programmes.

Planning and proposing new study programmes include an analysis of justification for delivering a study programme, resources and alignment with the strategic goals at the local and regional level, and other needs of society.
Since the last re-accreditation the HEI has launched three new study programmes and an analysis of justification for delivering a study programme was made and all other necessary analyses were performed according to the standard procedure.

The higher education institution publishes up-to-date versions of study programmes.

Updated information on the study programmes are also available on the following websites:

https://vsmti.hr/studijski-programi/preddiplomski-studij/
https://vsmti.hr/studijski-programi/diplomski-studij/

The higher education institution records the changes to study programmes and analyses their fitness for purpose.

Based on the provided examples of the performed revisions of the study programmes the Expert Panel has noticed a lack of a clear justification for the requested revisions.

Recommendations for improvement

1. During the revision of the study programme, a justification for changes is missing while there are some major changes. We strongly recommend including justifications for all revisions of study programmes.

2. Actively involve external associates in the study programme revisions.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

2.5. The higher education institution ensures that ECTS allocation is adequate.

Analysis

The higher education institution allocates ECTS credits in accordance with the actual student workload, based on the analyses of feedback from stakeholders in the teaching process, or other procedures.

In 2018 and 2019, the HEI carried out the survey among the students to assess the harmonization of ECTS credits and actual student workload. The survey has shown discrepancies between the ECTS credits and the actual workload on only one course, which resulted in a recommendation to take corrective measures and redistribute ECTS credits. However, it is unclear which of the mentioned corrections were implemented. The HEI evidently carried out a survey related to the harmonization of ECTS credits for the first time, and that, apart from the survey, it does not have a clearly prescribed procedure. This is also evident from the recommendation from the report on the carried-out survey proposing that the survey be modified and amended.

Students are provided with feedback on the results of the analysis of gathered information and the implemented changes.

The results of the completed survey were presented at the councils and students were informed about them through student representatives.

Part of ECTS credits in the study programme is gained in practical teaching.
All the study programmes delivered at the HEI have a mandatory course "Internship" during which students acquire ECTS credits through practical work in companies (8 to 12 ECTS). Teaching of some courses includes practical and field teaching and students gain ECTS credits for these activities.

Recommendations for improvement

1. Develop the procedure for reconciling ECTS credits with the actual student workload, which will involve other stakeholders in the teaching activity along with the students.

2. Communication should be improved – example of a student representative who is not aware of the Expert Council.

Quality grade
Minimum level of quality

2.6. Student practice is an integral part of the study programmes.

Analysis
The higher education institution allows for learning and obtaining new skills through student practice.
Internship is mandatory at all the study programmes of the HEI, and it carries 8-12 ECTS.

Student practice is an integral part of study programmes and is organised outside the higher education institution, in cooperation with the labour market.
The HEI has adopted the Ordinance on Internship and they have signed cooperation agreements with companies hosting internship. Students can perform internship in a company and within the HEI, in the Research and Development Centre. The HEI has also ensured the opportunity for students to do internship abroad through the Erasmus+ program.

Student practice is carried out in a systematic and responsible manner, ensuring the achievement of intended learning outcome regarding student practice.
The HEI has prepared the Evaluation Questionnaire on the Efficacy of Internship which was completed once, and the response from the employers was weak. The HEI is planning to prepare an electronic version of the questionnaire which will be a mandatory annex of the Internship Report. It is not clear if the students are given the opportunity to evaluate employers hosting internship.

Inconsistencies were noticed in the provided samples of the internship reports – some of them are written as seminar papers, while some were written as activity logs.

Recommendations for improvement

1. Develop the procedure for gathering and analysing feedback from students and employers on the quality of internship.

2. Harmonise the internship reports - for example as an activity log/record recording the days and activities a student performed during internship.

3. Increase the number of hours and avoid splitting the period of practical training. Consider introducing practical training during all study years.

4. HEI should make sure that mentors of the internship are not overloaded with lectures since it has impact on the quality of the performance in monitoring and coordinating practical training.

5. Recommendation is to form/establish the Career centre with the team of employees in order to manage, organize and monitor implementation of practical training for all students

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

3. Teaching process and student support

3.1. Admission criteria or criteria for the continuation of studies are in line with the requirements of the study programme, clear, published and consistently applied.

Analysis
The criteria for admission or continuation of studies are published.
The Self-evaluation describes criteria for the enrolment in undergraduate studies, which are also available online - criteria for enrolment. Potential students apply via Postani student website, and the ranking list is based on the results of State Matura exam and secondary school GPA. The students confirmed that all information was available during the enrolment process.
Criteria for the enrolment in graduate studies are also included in Self-evaluation report, and available at webpage criteria for enrolment.
Aside from regulating the process of enrolment to undergraduate and graduate study programme, the Ordinance on Studying of Virovitica College also establishes the basic

criteria under which students are allowed to change their status (from full-time to part-time students), change the field within the same professional study programme, or change the programme, as well as the criteria for readmission of students who have lost their student status, and the admission of students who are transferring to Virovitica College from some other higher education institution.

The criteria for admission or continuation of studies are consistently applied.
According to the management and the students of the Virovitica College, the criteria for admission or continuation of studies are indeed consistently applied.

The criteria for admission or continuation of studies ensure the selection of candidates with appropriate prior knowledge, which is aligned with the requirements of the study programme.
The criteria for admission or continuation of studies in general do ensure the selection of candidates with appropriate prior knowledge, which is aligned with the requirements of the study programme. However, the candidates have different levels of prior knowledge, which has been confirmed by the analyses of pass rates at examinations (showing low pass rate at the 1st year of study). As a result, HEI introduced propaedeutic courses in key areas.
Students confirmed to the Panel that the candidates who have completed the undergraduate professional study programme Management (field: Informatics Management) can enrol the graduate study programme (both streams) without any additional requirements. The students do not believe this is right since the content of some courses on graduate level is adjusted to students with inadequate prior knowledge, i.e. the content from the undergraduate study is reiterated. See analysis and recommendations under quality standard 1.2.

The higher education institution has effective mechanisms for recognising prior learning.
According to the Ordinance on Studying, if a student has passed an exam at another study programme at any higher education institution, it can be recognised by Virovitica College - the decision is made by the teacher of the course in question. The Ordinance does not include provisions on the recognition of prior learning (non-formal or informal learning).
Students who transfer from other HEIs get their exams recognized in accordance with the Ordinance on Studying.

Recommendations for improvement
1. Candidates who have completed undergraduate professional study programme Management (field: Informatics Management) should take differential courses prior to the enrolment to the graduate study of Management (e.g. for Destination

Management, introduce courses such as Introduction to Tourism, Selective Forms of Tourism, etc.) Analyse whether differential courses are also needed for the candidates who have completed other undergraduate studies.

2. Introduce recognition of prior learning (non-formal and informal learning).

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

3.2. The higher education institution gathers and analyses information on student progress and uses it to ensure the continuity and completion of study.

Analysis
Procedures for monitoring student progress are clearly defined and available.
The Quality Assurance Manual (work instruction RU-08-05 Monitoring student progress) describes the ways in which the academic progress is monitored.

The information on student progress in the study programme is regularly collected and analysed.
The annual report of the Vice-Dean for Academic Affairs includes the analysis of student pass rates (from first to second, and from second to third year of study), as well as the analysis of completion rates.
Insufficient information is collected by way of survey, and the number of students participating in the survey is not analysed. Students are not convinced that the survey is anonymous, which reflects in the results thereof. All the questions in the student survey should be mandatory.

The higher education institution ensures adequate mechanisms for analysing student performance and pass rates, and initiates necessary actions accordingly.
Corrective measures are recommended on the basis of the report of Vice-Dean for Academic Affairs. Some of the measures that have been implemented are: a system of mentoring was established, aimed at providing direct support to students during the whole educational process; the possibility of attending next year's courses was introduced for the students who are repeating a year; midterms were introduced (following the recommendations from the previous re-accreditation), propaedeutic courses were introduced, etc.
The attrition rate is still rather high (Table 3.4 and Table 3.5) The management explained to the Panel that one of the reasons behind it is the enrolment for the sake of student benefits. Additional measures are needed for reducing the student attrition and

increasing the pass rate. HEI should also conduct in-depth analyses of the reasons behind such an attrition rate.

1. Identify the cause of student attrition and implement measures to reduce it.

2. Improve the student survey, collecting and analysis of data. Conduct the survey by study year.

3. HEI should collect additional information from student in order to improve the quality of courses.

Minimum level of quality

3.3. The higher education institution ensures student-centred learning.

The higher education institution encourages various modes of programme delivery, in accordance with the intended learning outcomes.
Different teaching methods are used, depending on the course; lectures, exercises, seminars, consulting sessions, field work and guest lectures. Prior to the beginning of each course, all necessary information is published on HEI's website.
Programme delivery and teaching methods applied ensure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. This is primarily related to programme delivery and applied teaching methods that focus on acquiring practical knowledge and knowledge required by the labour market, such as exercises, field work, project design, and particularly guest lectures.

Various teaching methods are used that encourage interactive and research-based learning, problem solving and creative and critical thinking.
Various teaching methods are used in teaching, stimulating interactive and investigative learning, problem solving, and creative and critical thinking. Some of these methods are: individual and group projects, collaborative learning, problem-based learning and field work. Since 2014, teachers have attended a number of trainings aimed at developing their teaching competencies. External associates do not seem to be sufficiently involved in activities aimed at improving their teaching methods and teaching competencies.

The HEI continually evaluates and adapts teaching methods and different modes of programme delivery.

At the end of the semester, an anonymous survey is carried out in accordance with the Ordinance on Evaluation of the Quality of the Teaching Process at Virovitica College. In addition, the work of teaching assistants is supervised by their mentors, and the teaching process is peer-reviewed by fellow teachers in accordance with the Plan for peer review of lessons for a specific academic year.

Student feedback for the academic year 2018/2019 showed that some teachers do not maintain an adequate level of teaching quality. The management should take appropriate measures to improve the quality of teaching in these cases.

Teaching methods are adapted to a diverse student population (non-traditional student population, part-time students, senior students, under-represented and vulnerable groups etc.).

Teaching schedule is accommodating commuter and part-time students - students confirmed this at the meeting with the Panel.

For this purpose, HEI uses an e-learning system that allows access to teaching materials for students, scheduling individual consultations, and organizing consultation lessons for smaller groups of students.

The higher education institution ensures the use of state-of-the-art technologies to modernise teaching.

HEI continuously invests in acquiring equipment necessary for the teaching process. The lecture halls are equipped with computers and projectors; staff rooms are also equipped with computers. The equipment is actively used both in teaching and for consultations (e.g. for e-mail or Skype consultations).

Available and committed teachers contribute to the motivation of students and their engagement.

The contribution of teachers to motivating and engaging students is reflected in everyday practice that places the student at the centre of the teaching process. The teachers evaluate teamwork, project work, and collaborative learning. Nevertheless, it is necessary to additionally strengthen the motivation and involvement of students.

The higher education institution encourages autonomy and responsibility of students.

HEI provides support to students in organizing various events, thus encouraging their autonomy and responsibility. The same is achieved by their active participation in HEI's various committees and councils.

Recommendations for improvement

1. Student feedback shows that certain lecturers are not able to perform quality teaching methods (assessment for 2018/2019). Management should take actions according to

collected data. The outcome of the meeting with external lecturers left an impression on the panel of members that they are not included enough in various trainings for teaching methods. Recommendation is to involve them and motivate them more to attend those types of training.

2. Student motivation problems should be given more attention by lecturers and management – find out reasons and increase the motivation of students and their engagements.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

3.4. The higher education institution ensures adequate student support.

Analysis
The higher education institution provides guidance on studying and career opportunities to students (for example, tutors, supervisors and other advisers as a support in student learning and progress).
Students are provided with the Information package and Quick Start Guide, a quick and easy source of information on IT systems, organisation of teaching, study programmes, non-academic provision, etc.
Mentors are available to undergraduate students, providing them with support to achieve their academic goals. In addition, student practice mentors inquire about the interests of students and - according to their feedback - suggest possible placements, actively contributing to their career opportunities.
Students confirmed to the Panel that they are satisfied with the availability of teachers and the support provided by the mentor throughout their study.
HEI did not provide any evidence of institutional support to student associations and organizations.

The higher education institution has established functional procedures for student career guidance, psychological and legal counselling, support to students with disabilities, support in outgoing and incoming mobility and library and student administration services and students are informed about them.
HEI's Career Development Commission carries out career counselling, networking of employers and students, organizing workshops, etc. Within a virtual platform, students can also create their own portfolio, which can be used for networking.
The ALUMNI VŠMTI association monitors the careers of graduate students, and its members hold guest lectures and share experiences.

HEI's Counselling Centre provides students with support in overcoming difficulties related to learning process and studying. HEI also has a student ombudsperson.

Teaching methods and methods of examination are adjusted to students with health issues / disabilities.

HEI has a College Library and a Students Office. During the meeting with the members of the Panel, students noted the lack of books in foreign languages, which would - in their opinion - be beneficial for their study.

Student support is tailored to a diverse student population (part-time students, mature students, students from abroad, students from under-represented and vulnerable groups, students with learning difficulties and disabilities, etc.).

The Erasmus coordinator provides assistance with administrative issues related to incoming and outgoing mobility.

The office hours of the Students Office are adjusted to both full-time and part-time students.

College secretariat and accounting service have defined office hours for students, and the information is posted on HEI's website.

Teachers adjust student's consultation hours to part-time students.

Lecture and examination schedule are accommodating (a significant number of) commuter and part-time students, allowing them to attend classes and sit exams.

The higher education institution employs an adequate number of qualified and committed professional, administrative and technical staff.

HEI has an appropriate number of professional, administrative and technical staff. Students have the opportunity to evaluate the quality of their work via an anonymous survey, in accordance with the Ordinance on the Evaluation of the Quality of Work of Employees in Professional Services. Professional staff takes part in outgoing mobility and professional development schemes.

Recommendations for improvement

1. HEI should motivate students to be actively involved in student associations and organisations.

2. Motivate students to participate in the work of Council of Students of Polytechnics and Colleges.

3. Motivate students to participate in Erasmus+ and introduce the new CEEPUS mobility programmes.

4. Improve the library holdings by acquiring more books in foreign languages.

3.5. The higher education institution ensures support to students from vulnerable and under-represented groups.

Analysis

The higher education institution monitors various needs of students from vulnerable and under-represented groups.

HEI ensures support to students from vulnerable and under-represented groups, which has been confirmed by the evidence from Self-evaluation, tour of the institution and meetings held during the visit. HEI is providing support to students with lower socio-economic status from own funds. The student dorm, which can accommodate 108 students, has 80 beds reserved for underprivileged students and 2 for students with disabilities. Access to premises is adapted for students with disabilities.

Students are provided with a computer room with Internet access, a study area in the library, and a common room / recreation area with table tennis.

Teaching process is adjusted to the individual needs of students from vulnerable and under-represented groups.

Lecture schedule is accommodating commuter students, allowing also for lunch breaks (students have subsidized meals).

The higher education institution invests resources in the support to students from vulnerable and under-represented groups.

Trainings are organised for teachers so they can adequately support vulnerable and under-represented groups. One of the examples is a seminar on support to dyslexic students. The efficiency of these seminars was demonstrated to Panel members with the example of a midterm exam, designed especially for a dyslexic student.

Students are provided with a handbook that offers useful tips for overcoming stress, taking exams, and acquiring the skills necessary for effective learning. Various workshops aimed at helping students with their study are also organised in the student dorm.

Recommendations for improvement
1. Continue with the current practice.

Quality grade
High level of quality

3.6. The higher education institution allows students to gain international experience.

Analysis

Students are informed about the opportunities for completing part of their study abroad.
Students are informed about the possibility to spend a part of their study (or student practice) abroad; information is published on HEI's website, together with testimonials of students who have participated in Erasmus+ so far, and can also be provided by HEI's Erasmus coordinator.

The higher education institution provides support to students in applying for and carrying out exchange programmes.
Institutional support to student mobility is ensured by the provisions of Ordinance on Erasmus+ Programme for Virovitica College International Mobility, Committee for Selection of Candidates within Erasmus Mobility, and the Erasmus Coordinator.
HEI has inter-institutional agreements with HEIs abroad - 14 such agreements have been signed so far (with institutions from Slovenia, Germany, Turkey, Macedonia, Czech Republic, Bulgaria and the Netherlands.)
Outgoing students have the opportunity to improve their language competencies via the Online Linguistic Support (OLS).
At the meeting with students, the Panel learned that there are enough opportunities for outgoing mobility, but that the students are reluctant to take them, either out of fear of change or lack of interest; they are certain, however, that the introduction of additional language classes and reading materials in foreign languages could change this situation. Students who have participated in the exchange programme have positive experiences with the support provided by the HEI.
There have been 12 cases of outgoing student mobility in the last 5 years, as evident in Table 3.6. A detailed insight into student mobility shows that the numbers peaked in 2015 - 2016 and have not significantly changed since. Two students received a special Dean's recognition from HEI for contributing to the international reputation of the College for Management in Tourism and Informatics in Virovitica through Erasmus+ programme; the intent behind this award was to encourage student participation in mobility programmes.

The higher education institution ensures the recognition of ECTS credits gained at another higher education institution.
HEI ensures the recognition of ECTS credits gained at another institution in accordance with the provisions of the Ordinance on Erasmus+ Programme for Virovitica College International Mobility.

The higher education institution collects information on student satisfaction with the quality of HEI's support regarding practical matters of student mobility.
HEI collects feedback on the student satisfaction with mobility via final report (upon their return). The reports are monitored and analysed by HEI's Erasmus Mobility Commission.

Students gain competencies required for the employment in an international environment.
It is the opinion of this Panel that students gain professional competencies required for the employment in an international environment. Nevertheless, students should be additionally stimulated to partake in international mobility in order to gain some other generic competencies, such as teamwork in a multicultural environment.

Recommendations for improvement
1. Additionally motivate students for participation in mobility programmes; in addition to student testimonials, it is recommended to organise lectures where students who have participated in mobility schemes could share their experiences.

2. Introduce course materials in foreign languages, as a preparation for midterms and/or final exams, seminars and lectures that would be conducted in language other than Croatian. Inform the students on the availability of course materials / books in other languages.

3. Organise guest lectures in English, by inviting lecturers from abroad.

4. Introduce additional foreign languages for specialisation in Tourism.

5. Introduce the CEEPUS mobility programme.

6. More should be invested in collaborating with institutions from other areas in Croatia, and also across borders. During the meeting with students there was only 1 student from Serbia. So it seems that there is not much interest for students from abroad to come to Virovitica on an exchange. Erasmus+ can offer opportunities in this respect.

Quality grade
Minimum level of quality

3.7 The higher education institution ensures adequate study conditions for foreign students.

Analysis

Information on the opportunities for enrolment and study is available to foreign students in a foreign language.
Information on enrolment and studying for foreign students are available on English on HEI's website.

The higher education institution provides support to foreign students in application and study.
HEI ensured the student accommodation by building Student Dormitory Virovitica, and also arranges accommodation for foreign students and lecturers with private and institutional renters. The panel members did not identify other forms of support.

The higher education institution collects feedback on satisfaction and needs of foreign students.
HEI collects feedback on student satisfaction and student needs through the Final Report.
One incoming Erasmus student was present at the meeting with students; she stated that she receives a good support from the HEI, that she is satisfied with her choice of institution and would recommend this HEI to her colleagues back home.

Foreign students have the opportunity to attend classes delivered in a foreign language (English).
According to the Table 3.6, in the last 5 academic years, there was a total of 5 incoming students. A detailed insight into incoming student mobility shows that students were almost exclusively from the neighbouring countries, speaking languages similar to Croatian, and that they had no problem with attending the classes in Croatian.
It is stated in the Self-evaluation that students have the opportunity to take courses in foreign languages, but only in the form of consultations.
The teaching staff currently attends English language courses in order to improve their language competencies, however, the Panel learned that they are still not ready to conduct classes in English.

Recommendations for improvement
1. Determine the actual language competencies of teachers, and the possibilities of carrying out courses in English.

2. Translate study materials and presentations in English, and use them for midterm/final exam preparations.

3. Organise guest lectures in English, by inviting lecturers from abroad.

4. Increase the number of incoming students by increasing outgoing mobility of both teachers and students.

5. Introduce a student buddy programme as help to incoming students.

Quality grade
Minimum level of quality

3.8. The higher education institution ensures an objective and consistent evaluation and assessment of student achievements.

Analysis
The criteria and methods for evaluation and grading are clear and published before the beginning of a course.
Criteria and methods used in evaluation and assessment are published before the start of courses on the web site of the Virovitica College, and in Loomen e-learning system.

The criteria and methods for evaluation and grading are aligned with the teaching methods used.
HEI implements different methods of programme delivery, such as: individual and group projects, collaborative learning, problem-based teaching, field work, lectures, seminars, exercises etc. Evaluation methods for the defined learning outcomes are in line with the implemented teaching methods (e.g. written exams, seminars, project and homework assignments, essays, oral exams.) However, as evidenced by one example of a midterm exam, the Panel concludes that grading criteria are not fully adequate, since they do not account for the entire learning outcome unit. The sample exam in question showed that students do not have to achieve all learning outcomes, but only score 50% at the exam to pass the course. It is necessary to develop a system of assessment that will prevent the passing of an exam unless all the learning outcomes are achieved, at least at the minimal level.

The higher education institution provides support to the assessors in the development of skills related to the testing and assessment methods.
During the meeting with the teaching staff, the Panel learned that they have support with regard to development of their teaching skills; in particular, a number of trainings on methods of assessment and examination were organised by HEI and other institutions.
During the meeting with the external stakeholders, the Panel learned that they are not sufficiently involved in educational activities, including the trainings on how to assess the learning outcomes.

The higher education institution ensures objectivity and reliability of grading.
Students did not have any complaints regarding the objectivity and consistency of student evaluations carried out by the teaching staff. The procedure of academic appeal is described in Regulations on study; there were no requests for exams before an examination committee so far. Students can also file a complaint with the student ombudsman, who is - according to HEI Statute - appointed by the Student Union.
Students can provide their comments or suggestions anonymously via the student mailbox. Feedback regarding the objectivity and consistency of student evaluation and grading is also obtained through the student survey.

If possible, the higher education institution carries out the evaluation of grading.
For each examination term HEI creates a Report on the Pass Rates, which is presented to the Department Councils and the Expert Council. It is not clear, however, whether any measures for improvement have been taken so far.

The evaluation procedures take into account special circumstances of certain groups of students (modifying examination procedures to suit e.g. students with disabilities), while at the same time ensuring the achievement of intended learning outcomes.
Teaching materials and exams are adjusted to students with dyslexia - the Panel was provided with an example of one such exam.

Students receive feedback on the evaluation results, and if necessary, guidelines for learning based on these evaluations.
Students can get feedback regarding their evaluation results and other activities that are assessed during the consultation hours.

Recommendations for improvement
1. Like 2.3.: A successfully passed course means that a student has reached at least a minimum level of all prescribed learning outcomes for the course. It is proposed to establish a threshold for each learning outcome, and by passing that threshold the student will be considered to have reached the minimum of that learning outcome. It is proposed to allow the assessment of the learning outcomes which have not been achieved in exams. It is proposed that the course teacher keeps a record of the level of student's achievement of the course learning outcomes through various assessments. Using this record, the teacher will know which learning outcomes a student has achieved, and which he/she has not, and modify their teaching/assessment activities accordingly.

2. Include external stakeholders in trainings on how to assess learning outcomes.

3. The system of grading could be improved by introducing a practice of periodical double marking, whereby teachers would re-assess (examples of) exams already graded by their colleagues. Teachers can thus get a constructive feedback from their peers, which could help them improve their method of grading.

Quality grade
Minimum level of quality

3.9. The higher education institution guarantees the issuance of Diploma Supplements and adequate qualification information.

Analysis
Upon the completion of their studies, students are issued appropriate documents (diploma and Diploma Supplement).
Based on the information from Self-evaluation and the examination of sample diplomas and diploma supplements, the Panel determined that HEI issues adequate documents to students upon the completion of their study.

The higher education institution issues the Diploma Supplement in Croatian and English, free of charge.
Diplomas and diploma supplements are issued as per Ordinance on the Content of Diplomas and Diploma Supplements and regulations adopted by HEI: Regulations on the Content and Format of Diplomas and Diploma Supplements, and Information Package for the Transfer of ECTS.

Recommendations for improvement
1. Continue with the current practice.

Quality grade
High level of quality

3.10. The higher education institution is responsible for the employability of graduates.

Analysis
The higher education institution analyses the employability of its graduates.
HEI collects and analyses data from the Croatian Employment Service and the Croatian Pension Insurance Institute (Table 3.7).

HEI participated in the national survey of the employability of graduates, carried out by the Agency for Science and Higher Education, and analysed data on employability of domicile graduates as well as the overall employability of this population. Since 2014, HEI conducts own survey on the employability of its graduates.

Admission quotas are aligned with social and labour market needs and available resources. HEI aligns its admission quotas with the needs of the labour market and institutional resources. Admission quotas have consequently been reduced in the field of economics, and new study programmes in the STEM area launched.

The higher education institution informs prospective students about the opportunities to continue education or find employment after graduation.
Through its ALUMNI Association and Career Development Committee, HEI informs prospective students about the possibilities of continuing education and/or employment upon graduation.

The higher education institution provides students with support regarding future career planning.
HEI provides support to students regarding career planning through its Career Development Committee.

The higher education institution maintains contacts with alumni.
Former students share experience from their business and entrepreneurial practice as guest speakers through the ALUMNI Association and in the Practical Management Journal.

Recommendations for improvement
1. The Panel believes that HEI should inform the students as much as possible on the possibilities of employment at the national level. The current practice regarding the employment at the local level is adequate.

2. Continue monitoring the needs of the labour market, and regulate the enrolment quotas and development of new study programmes accordingly.

3. Encourage students to turn their ideas into start-ups upon the completion of their study, and thus develop their skills and abilities.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

4. Teaching and institutional capacities

4.1. The higher education institution ensures adequate teaching capacities.

Analysis

The number and qualifications of teachers (election in the appropriate field and/or area) are appropriate for the delivery of study programme and achievement of the intended learning outcomes and conducting scientific activity.

The number and qualifications of the teachers of Virovitica College are appropriate for the realisation of most of the study programmes and the acquisition of the expected learning outcomes. There is only a concern about the Department for Engineering and Information and Communication Technology, where only 4 teachers have been appointed. In accordance with the data from table 4.1.b. of the Analytical Supplement, in the academic year 2018/2019, Virovitica College employs:

1. two College Professors (one of whom with tenure),
2. eight Senior Lecturers,
3. seven Lecturers (two of them part-time) and
4. six teaching assistants.

In accordance with the data from table 4.3. of the Analytical Supplement, out of the total of 17 teachers with appointment to teaching grade, four were selected in the technical field, 12 in the field of social sciences, and one in the field of natural sciences. Two teachers were appointed to the scientific grades of research associates in the field of social sciences.

Besides teaching, teachers, also engage in scientific research and professional work, and their experiences are transferred to students who are also involved in project design and writing of papers.

While research is an important component in a University of Applied Sciences and Polytechnics, the amount of time invested in research is rather limited at this stage. It is also not very clear how the linkage between Education and Research is safeguarded. In the present structure research is not integrated in the teaching – it is a separate centre. On average teachers can spend 5 to 10% of their time on research, as teachers mentioned in the interviews. There is a Research Centre, which was set up in 2013. So far projects have mostly been IT or software related projects (as table 2 shows in self-evaluation report).

Teachers are encouraged to connect their teaching with a PhD study.

The ratio of students and full-time teachers at the higher education institution ensures a high quality of study

Virovitica College has a very favourable teacher: student ratio. This was achieved mainly as a result of lowering the enrolment quota's for fulltime students and of temporary

suspension of enrolment of part time students. Currently lectures are held with a maximum of 120 students, seminars, auditory exercises and foreign languages are held with maximum 30 students, while laboratories with a maximum of 10 students. The data provided to the panel come from the interviews held with stakeholders.

This ratio cannot be maintained if the College grows in numbers. So, it is important according to the panel, that additional financial resources are sought more actively, to anticipate on this. A College cannot depend solely on public funding. It is in the interest of the sustainability and growth of the institution that other financial sources are tapped into. This ensures the quality of teaching and allows maintaining the student-ratio at this level.

Teacher workload is in line with relevant legislation and policies, regulations of competent bodies, collective agreements, etc.
Teacher workload is in line with all regulations.

Teacher workload ensures appropriate distribution of teaching, professional and/or scientific activities, professional and personal development and administrative duties.
Workload is distributed unevenly amongst teaching staff. The self-evaluation report shows that one teacher is teaching 15 modules, while others teach 1 or 2 modules. Also teaching assistants have a very heavy workload. One of them is teaching 11 courses.
Teachers at this stage are not very internationally oriented and insufficiently work together with the external associates through which they can connect directly with the business environment and take care that teaching is aligned to the needs of the environment and labour market.

Teachers are qualified for the course/courses they deliver.
Examining the data available in SER and Crosbi link, most teachers are qualified to teach the courses they deliver. A side note is that teachers teach a great variety of subjects (1 teacher up to 15) and this raises the question what the depth and breadth is of the topic being taught.
Teachers are continually trained in new approaches to teaching and conducting internship through workshops and seminars, as well as training at foreign European higher education institutions within the Erasmus (+) Mobility Programme.
Students feel that the quality of some teachers leaves a lot to be desired, which is also reflected in student surveys. Based on the survey results, HEI employed a new teacher as a way or resolving this problem.
There is also lack of a lecturer within the appropriate field – a lecturer in mathematics teaches the subject of signalling in electrical studies. Still, most of the teachers appear to be qualified to teach the courses they deliver.

Additionally, it was noted by the panel, that teachers speak English poorly. Students should be encouraged to speak English and teachers should be role models in this respect by giving the example.

Recommendations for improvement

1. Teachers are very important for the quality of education and the reputation of the College. Competition is fierce in Croatia - 77% of students study at universities and only a small number at Polytechnics or Colleges. Therefore, it is vital to attract qualified staff and ensure career development of staff.

2. Strengthen the involvement of teachers in research.

3. Diversify the type of research projects.

4. Develop a clear framework explaining how outcomes of research can be transferred to the curriculum, so it contains real-life cases of companies in the region.

5. Workload must be distributed better over teaching staff and assistants.

6. Teachers should have a % of their time to dedicate to research.

7. Teaching assistants should not become secretaries or remain assistants, but can grow in their function to become a qualified teacher.

8. Teachers that are well qualified should teach topics and as much as possible it should be avoided that teachers teach a multitude of topics which may lead to degradation of the quality.

9. While a student spoke about teachers as 'friends', they are quite critical about teaching performance. It should be very clear that teachers are professionals from which students can learn.

10. Teachers also mentioned that they are not allowed to work from home. This does not encourage teachers to take responsibility of their own time, investment in other activities than teaching and spending time on research. While mention is being made of academic autonomy', this is not ensured by this tight control over time by management. Teachers should be given the opportunity to work at home for 1 day a week, to write on articles, be involved in research projects, invest in collaborations with colleagues from other universities.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

4.2. The higher education institution ensures appropriate quality of external associates.

The external associates have a relevant work experience.

The region where the College is located is mostly based on Agriculture. It is also a region with a high unemployment rate (30%). Companies are mostly SME's, and there are only a few large companies. There is an Incubator and there are plans for 3 more incubators.

In general, it can be said that the College has a strong and good relationship with the business community. The associates have relevant work experience and are very committed to the school and its students. They all come from the region.

The panel noted that the External Associates who were interviewed represented one age category. This raises the question whether involvement of a more diversified group of people in terms of age and gender, can create opportunities in terms of awareness of new trends and possibilities in their sector. Also their English was limited and they did not appear to be very confident as to what was expected of them besides teaching. External Associates seem to come and go, they expressed that at times they do not feel very connected to the College. They are not being involved enough, while they would like to be. They should also invest in trainings and workshops to develop their pedagogical capacities, to become qualified supervisors and tutors.

The external associates include the latest research, trends and labour market findings in the teaching process.

This point was not specifically addressed during the meeting. So, it is not clear to what extent associates include relevant and the latest teaching.

The HEI encourages the participation of external associates in the supervision of final and graduation theses.

The self-evaluation report states that Virovitica College encourages participation of external associates in mentorship of undergraduate dissertations and graduate theses. According to Article 6 of the Ordinance on Undergraduate Dissertations, upon the proposal of the Department Council, an external associate of Virovitica College can also be a mentor. In this case, the Committee for Undergraduate Dissertations appoints a co-mentor, selected among employees who are mentors, who helps and monitors the activities of the external associate-mentor until the final defending of the undergraduate dissertation or graduate thesis.

External Associates are however not systematically involved in the supervision of final and graduation theses. They are insufficiently aware what the requirements are and how they could be involved.

The HEI encourages the organization of professional practice in institutions in which the external associates are employed.

There is a gap in communication and involvement of external lecturers in the creation of study programs such as; awareness of changes in requirements of preparation of syllabuses according to Bloom's taxonomy, learning outcomes, quality of marketing plans, quality of seminars and research papers done by students, quality of final thesis and exam creation (in terms of checking learning outcomes) etc.

During the meeting with external lecturers there was a rather small attendance; only 6 external lecturers attended the meeting. There is no practice adopted to invite external lecturers to meetings with internal staff and therefore there is a lack of information on the learning outcomes, study programs and there is no representative of the external lecturers who can attend meetings of expert council. External lecturers meet management occasionally on the principle of individual bi-lateral talks, but not in organised workshop or training meeting form. Consequently, there is a lack of quality information related to study program changes and required improvements provided to external lecturers (which has an impact on the quality of their syllabuses, seminars and exams). Most of the external lecturers present at the meeting were not mentors for graduation theses; only one was, which is found as a weakness and should be significantly improved in the future.

In case there is a possibility for doing student practice in the parent institution of the external associate, Virovitica College initiates the conclusion of the Cooperation Agreement which is the basis for the possibility of doing the student practice.

Recommendations for improvement

The External Associates are important stakeholders in the business community who can help students via internships, projects and later employment. It is important that they form a tight network around the institution. Not only as teachers, but also as experts in the specific sectors around the programs offered by the Institution. Knowledge can be developed through research projects and these lessons can then be fed back into curricula or teaching. This will raise the quality level of what is being taught, by including real-life cases and examples. Additionally, students can work on real-life problems.

1. Involve associates more actively in the curriculum development, the supervision of graduates;

2. Ensure that it is clear to the associates what is expected of them and offer training to supervise students;

3. It would be good to involve associates in research, since they are the link to practice. Associates could bring in real-life problems which through research or internships could be picked up by students;

4. Give clear instructions to Associates about the requirements of a Graduation Assignment.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

4.3. Teacher recruitment, advancement and re-appointment is based on objective and transparent procedures which include the evaluation of excellence.

Analysis
Teacher appointment (recruitment) procedures arise from the development goals of the higher education institution and they are aligned with the legislation and internal regulations in effect.

Teacher appointment is in line with legislation and internal regulations according to the SER. Recruitment is carried out in accordance with the teaching needs and the strategic goals.

One of the stated strategic goals mentioned in the SER is as follows: *"Continuous improvement of the teaching process by improving, adapting and introducing new study programmes, in accordance with the development of science, technologies and the needs of the labour market…"*. Teachers expressed to be very committed to the study programs they are involved in. Teachers mostly come from the region – it is difficult to attract teachers from other regions to this part of Croatia, which is marked by a high unemployment rate – and are aware of the opportunities and obstacles in the labour market.

In selecting, appointing and evaluating teachers, the HEI takes into account their previous activities (teaching activity, research activity, feedback from students, etc).

Teachers are recruited on the basis of their experience and past activities. It is not clear whether a strong research profile is a prerequisite for recruitment. Teachers mostly teach and have limited time to do research, while academic autonomy is stimulated. Teachers have the opportunity to advance themselves through PhD's and attendance of conferences.

Also feedback of students is a means to evaluate the teachers. Evaluations are at times quite critical and used to evaluate performance and take corrective actions if necessary.

The higher education institution has adequate methods for the selection of the best candidates for each position.

The higher institution does have appropriate methods to recruit and select teachers. When it comes to assess the quality level of the teachers based on the interviews, that was difficult. None of them spoke English, or very poorly. It seems that most teachers come from the region – it is difficult to attract staff from outside the region. This also has an impact on the quality of teachers.

Promotion of teachers into higher grades is based on the evaluation and rewarding of excellence and the HEI takes into account important achievements (such as successful projects, success in securing additional funds, supervision of final and graduation theses, authorship of textbooks / study materials, popular lectures etc.)
It is not clear to the panel how promotion to higher grades is achieved and how achievements are tied to this. The panel noted that teachers have courses tied to their specific area of expertise. There were successful projects (See Table 4.11). But the number of projects decreased. Income from projects decreased with 60%. They did not participate in projects in 2018. Their focus is very local, resulting in projects, which are also mostly local. They had 1 big project related to Croatian Qualification Framework. Investment in projects was very limited between 2018-2020
International conference subscriptions: 0%. No mention was made of publications in noteworthy journals, textbooks or handbooks to assess the quality of the teaching staff. Overall the impression the panel got from the visit and interviews is that the emphasis very much lies on teaching. How promotion is linked to achievements as mentioned in this standard, was not clarified.

Promotion procedures should also give teaching assistants the possibility to become teachers and teachers to become professors. The workload of teaching assistants is heavy. They must teach different courses. There are also teaching assistants doing a PhD, which means they are offered opportunities to grow professionally. They can also participate in Erasmus+ programs. The panel asked if there is a formal procedure about what you have to learn or do, so as to grow in your career, but they said it was not clear to them. So it is not clear what are the criteria of career advancement of teaching assistants to become teachers, or of teachers/lecturers to become professors.
Also, in order to become more competitive and to position itself in the academic field, HEI should increase the number of college professors, since there are only two of them employed so far (table 4.1.b).

Indicators of excellence include professional and/or scientific and teaching activities.
The qualification of teachers for delivery of individual courses is in principle visible based on their published papers, i.e. the scientific and professional activities performed, as well from their previous work experience. But publications are very limited, and it is not clear in what type of journals they are published.

Student evaluations are a means to assess teaching performance of teachers. Also, publication of papers and involvement in research activities is an indicator to assess performance.

Additional criteria for the promotion of teachers into higher grades reflect the strategic goals of the higher education institution.

Although minimal criteria for the promotion of teachers into higher grades are laid down at national level, a HEI can set out additional criteria in compliance with its Strategy. The SER clearly shows that Virovitica College has additional criteria concerning the involvement of teachers in the accomplishment of additional tasks such as: Head of Department, Head of a Centre, editor of the journal, project leader, etc. It is also taken into consideration whether he or she has been awarded for their work; whether they have chaired sessions at international conferences or have participated in organisational/programme committees; whether they have promoted science and their profession through their public activity. All set out additional criteria are in compliance with the HEI's Strategy.

Recommendations for improvement

1. Teachers mostly come from the county. It would be good to attract teachers from other regions – this could diversify the teaching population and be an incentive to collaborate.

2. While student evaluations are used, it is not clear how that is used as an instrument to assess performance and if evaluations are negative, what the consequence is for the teacher in question. Evaluations should be used to measure performance, but also as an instrument to improve quality.

3. Formally there are ways to improve teaching. But in practice this is not always realized because teachers simply do not have enough time to fulfil requirements for advancements and invest in academic development especially through publications. This can be improved. Teachers have insufficient time because of the heavy workload and obligatory presence.

4. More teachers should be encouraged to do a PhD and involve more in academic activities.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

4.4. The higher education institution provides support to teachers in their professional development.

The higher education institution provides opportunities for the improvement of teaching competencies.

Teachers are encouraged to attend conferences and to connect their teaching with PhD studies. Every academic year a plan of conferences that teachers can attend, is drafted. Teachers are also involved in projects. This means that teachers have a variety of tasks and activities to carry out.

Teachers should become specialists in a specific knowledge domain and area. They could then involve graduate students in their research to gather data. In this way a general more academic ambiance will develop in the College.

The higher education institution encourages the assessment and improvement of teaching competencies based on the peer-review recommendations and the results of student satisfaction surveys.

The student evaluations are a way to spot teaching problems. It is not clear whether it is part of the performance appraisal procedure to talk about this and take necessary measures in terms of training to improve on these aspects. It is also not clear whether teachers need to have a pedagogical qualification to be able to teach. In many other European countries this is compulsory. There is a basic and advanced qualification, based on experience and years of teaching.

Teachers participate in mobility programmes, projects, networks, etc.
The participation of teachers in mobility programs, networks, projects, etc. is limited.

Recommendations for improvement
1. More should be invested in the professional development of teachers. They now have little time to invest in research, set up projects, collaborate with peers, set up Erasmus+ exchange programs.

2. Teachers should participate more actively in Erasmus+ programs, international projects, research activities, etc.

3. The College should consider organizing a yearly conference. Similar institutions with another quality level, have their own conferences and this is good to position the College as a knowledge institute which is also contributing to knowledge creation and development for the purpose of solving problems within organizations or the region.

4. Improve language skills of employees especially since at least English should be fluently spoken by employees holding masters and doctoral degrees. They should be able to lecture classes in English for Erasmus students and publish research

papers internationally in English language. Because of the low English knowledge level employees can't participate in Erasmus programs and this is endangering the further training, learning and improvement of staff. On the long term it could also have a bad impact on competitiveness of the HEI. Partnership with foreign institutions should be broadened and language skills are one of the major prerequisites for it.

5. Not enough advantage is taken of the opportunities created by Erasmus+ in terms of mobilities, student exchange programs and strategic partnerships or transnational cooperation.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

4.5. The space, equipment and the entire infrastructure (laboratories, IT service, work facilities etc.) are adequate for the delivery of the study programmes and ensure the achievement of intended learning outcomes and the implementation of professional and/or scientific activity.

Analysis
The higher education institution plans and improves the infrastructure development, in line with the strategic goals.
In the self-evaluation report it is said that as a result of the implementation of the Development Strategy for the Period 2009-2013, in the second half of 2011, Virovitica College was relocated to the completely renovated and modern equipped premises of the former army barracks in Virovitica, where it is currently located, which has 2,832.57 m² of disposable space. Virovitica College has ten lecture rooms and three IT rooms (each with 15 computers for students) at its disposal. Working offices are used by 1 or 2 persons.

The College offers an excellent environment for teaching, conferencing, work facilities and IT services and labs. The College has a good location and enough parking facilities. There is a nice restaurant and dormitory on the premises. The building is an inviting space, which offers good working conditions and a place to learn. Conference rooms are spacious and comfortable. If the College grows, the question is whether the present building offers sufficient capacity.

The space, equipment and entire infrastructure (laboratories, IT services, work facilities etc.) are appropriate for the delivery of study programmes and ensuring the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

The space, equipment and infrastructure are appropriate for the delivery of the study programs. Though the equipment for the Laboratory Electrical Engineering was not there. The Panel noted that the Head of the dorm is very active in organizing activities for students to make them feel comfortable. The premises are very well kept and furnished. The student dorm, which can accommodate 108 students, has 80 beds reserved for underprivileged students and 2 for students with disabilities. Access to premises is adapted for students with disabilities.

The space, equipment and the entire infrastructure (laboratories, IT service, work facilities etc.) are appropriate for the implementation of professional and /or scientific activities.
The space, equipment and infrastructure are appropriate for scientific activities, though the library is rather small and the collection does not seem very rich. There are nice conference rooms where meetings could be held with teachers to talk about research.

Recommendations for improvement

1. Anticipate on the further growth of the College and take adequate measures in terms of space and infrastructure.

2. Enlarge the collection of the library to include more international journals in the collection and recent literature for study programs

3. Refurbish the Laboratory Electrical Engineering adequately so it meets the standards of similar labs.

Quality grade
High level of quality

4.6. The library and library equipment, as well as access to additional resources ensure the literature necessary for ensuring high-quality of study and scientific and teaching activity.

Analysis
The library and library equipment, including the additional resources, meet the conditions for a high-quality of study
The library is located in the central area of the College building, on the ground floor. According to the SER the library fund has 1269 titles in 3773 copies, and users (members) can be all students studying in the Republic of Croatia. Literature is represented through the fields of social sciences, statistics, politics, economics, trade, law, education, mathematics and natural sciences, and applied sciences and technical sciences. There is also a reference library available, with newer releases, which is of high

importance for the reference library (for example, because of the update of data in lexicons, atlases, etc.).

The librarian told the Panel that the library is used intensively by students and staff, though it seemed as if the collection was not complete yet. Many shelves were empty. As such the library meets the requirements and conditions for a satisfactory level of quality.

The library and library equipment, including the additional resources, ensure high-quality professional and/or scientific activity.

The library is rather small. The Panel also noted that the library had quite some empty shelves, suggesting that the collection is not complete yet. Scientific activity includes giving access to scientific sources and also offering a space where researchers could meet and discuss and work. For the latter the library is too small. It is not a place or space where seminars could be held on a regular basis where teachers share their research with each other and students. This can be done in the conference rooms. The collection at this stage is rather limited for scientific purposes.

Recommendations for improvement

1. The collection of the library should be enlarged with international journals and most up-to-date literature.

2. The subscription on journals and magazines is based on the financial means offered by the state, but the HEI should consider enlarging subscription on journals.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

4.7 The higher education institution rationally manages its financial resources.

Analysis

Financial sustainability and efficiency is evident in all aspects of the higher education institution's activity.

The procedure to create transparency about financial management is described at length in the Self-Evaluation report submitted by the College.

The sustainability is not totally evident because the College relies solely on government funds. This is quite risky, in terms of continuity and sustainability. It is common practice in universities and UAS to have different income streams. The Institution should also find other sources of funding.

HEI manages its financial resources transparently, efficiently and appropriately.

Financial resources are indeed managed transparently and appropriately. The efficiency is difficult to assess on the basis of the interviews the Panel had. Efficiency is also related to throughput time. There has to be a constant flow of students coming in, being educated and graduated in the allocated time. It appeared from the discussions that many students apply for the College, but that number by far does not come to study. So question is why this is the case and what the level is of the students that actually do study at the Institution. This can be assessed by their grades and the extent to which they graduate within the given timeframe of the educational program.

Additional sources of funding are used for institutional development and improvement.
Hardly any additional sources of funding are secured besides governmental ones.

Additional sources of funding are secured through national and international projects, cooperation with the industry, local community, etc.
While the financial sustainability, efficiency and transparency are OK, insufficient sources are secured from national and international projects. The College does not secure enough income and funds from contract activities, sponsorships, or public funds. A decrease in project participation on the long run, will lead to a decrease in project revenues, and this is unfavourable for the growth and the continuity of the institution. There is international cooperation through one of the companies in the Incubator, Blue Factory. But this is very limited.

Recommendations for improvement
1. Increase project participation.

2. Increase international collaboration, exchange, partnerships nationally and across borders.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

5. Professional and/or scientific activity

5.1. Teachers and associates employed at the higher education institution are committed to the achievement of high quality and quantity of professional and/or scientific research.

Analysis
Teachers and associates publish an appropriate number of high-quality professional and/or scientific publications.

During the assessment in the HEI, a collection of published papers and teaching materials are present. The number of published papers mentioned in the SER is 142. Most of papers are categorized as professional. On the other side more papers are mentioned in the Table 4.4 of the analytic supplement. Based on this table 60 scientific and 23 professional papers have been published in the field technical sciences. In the field of social sciences 108 scientific and 36 professional papers were published. In the field of natural sciences 4 scientific and 17 professional papers have been published.

Since publishing professional papers is usually faster than scientific papers and content can be focussed on teaching topics, the mentioned number is not appropriate for a HEI with a professional focus. Although the study program "Electrical Engineering" is quite new, a teaching book has been published, which can be interpreted as an engagement of the teacher in a positive way.

The higher education institution has efficient procedures for encouraging high-quality professional and/or scientific publication.
Based on a plan of publishing activity, teachers are encouraged to publish in conferences by means of funding from the HEI. The complexity of writing professional papers is generally low. Professional papers can be created spontaneously. Therefore, the procedure should be able to handle not planned publications in advance.

The higher education institution keeps records on the distribution of publications by areas/departments of the HEI and encourages teachers and associates from various fields to publish.
A transparent procedure for encouragement and mentioning rules for funding of publications is not available. The funding is rather based on "goodwill" of the dean.

Teachers and associates of the higher education institution actively promote professional and/or scientific achievements at national and international conferences.
Teachers and associates of the HEI published their achievements in national and international conferences. The number is quite small, and the focus is national. An own conference for promotion of their activities and achievements doesn't exist.

Recommendations for improvement
1. The number of published papers especially with regard to professional ones should be improved. This belongs to the core mission of such institution.
2. Publications in international conferences or journals should be encouraged. This leads indirectly to the improvement of skills of professors and teaching staff in terms of English language.
3. A transparent procedure encouraging publications should be defined and introduced.

4. An own conference for promotion of own achievements should be organized.

Minimum level of quality

5.2. The higher education institution proves the social relevance of its professional and/or scientific research and transfer of knowledge.

Analysis

The higher education institution monitors and takes into consideration the needs of society, local community and labour market in planning its professional and/or scientific and research activities.

The needs of society, local community and labour market are taken into account by means of a strong cooperation between the HEI and local community and business people from the region. Those are organized as business councils and serve as advisory boards for the HEI. Three Business councils for different main areas are installed. The areas are tourism, economics and information and communications technologies.

During the interviews, a strong commitment of the business councils to the HEI and its development is noticed.

It has been shown that the Business councils actively participate in the activities of the Virovitica College especially with regard to the adaptation of study programmes. In this context, revisions of study programmes in the fields of:

- Management in Rural Tourism, Entrepreneurship in accordance to the methodology and principles of the Croatian Qualification Framework within the IPA 4 project 'Adoption of CROQF Principles in Higher Education for Tourism Sector', and 'HR 3.1.15 0052 Adoption of CROQF Principles in Professional Study Programmes of Entrepreneurship'.
- Computer Science, main field Software Engineering
- Electrical Engineering, main field Telecommunication and Information Technology.

The HEI maintains a good relationship to incubators in the region. During the visit to the incubator in Virovitica, it has been mentioned that students from the HEI are encouraged to carry out their internships in the companies installed there. The main goal of such cooperation is the development of start-ups and spin-offs companies and encourage students to develop a business idea and create a business plan while studying, under a mentoring system and assistance of their teachers and teaching assistants. Although courses related to Enterprise Creation and Management, Marketing of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises are present, showed exams with regard to the

topic "entrepreneurship" with good marks don't treat the problem deeply and therefore the assessment of exams should be improved and reflect the right level of students.

The higher education institution has an efficient support system for research and transfer of knowledge and technologies.
The support of research and transfer of knowledge and technologies is described with activities of teaching staff by participating in different events, e. g. workshops, conferences as well as with expert opinions.
The specificity of the transfer of knowledge is not well justified. Activities are generic and not detailed.
The collaboration between the HEI and professional organization is organized by means of projects as well as different activities such as Open Door Day, schools, workshops even with regard to social aspects e. g. family and/or career.

Teachers and associates participate in the activities of professional organisations.
The HEI cooperates with the public sector as well as with professional organizations. A representative of Virovitica College has been appointed as a representative of higher education institutions, providers of education and training services and research centres in the Partner Council for the area of Virovitica-Podravina County. Individual Teachers of the HEI are engaged with long-term memberships in different councils e. g. Tourist Council of the Tourist Board of the Municipality of Pitomača, the Assembly and Council of the Tourist Board of Virovitica-Podravina County, as well as in the Expert Council of the Cultural Centre Drago Britvić.

Recommendations for improvement
1. The support of the transfer of knowledge is based on individual activities of engaged teachers or representatives. A strong cooperation in the field of tourism is noticed. The transfer of knowledge should be extended to other fields.
2. A procedure allowing monitoring and encouragement for transfer should be defined and introduced.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

5.3. Professional and/or scientific achievements of the higher education institution have been recognized in the regional, national and international context.

Analysis

Teachers and associates have received regional, national and international awards and acknowledgements for their professional and/or scientific achievements.

Professional and scientific achievements of HEI have been recognized with different awards in different conferences for scientific and professional achievements as well as for consideration in best paper awards. Only 2 awards and consideration of 3 papers can be seen as minimum and should be improved.

The higher education institution is a holder of an adequate number of projects.

The HEI collaborates with economy and the local community and with higher education institutions. In the field of entrepreneurship, the HEI was involved as project holder in the project "HR 3.1.15 0052 Adoption of the principles of the Croatian Qualification Framework in Professional Study Programmes of Entrepreneurship".

Projects mentioned in the table 5.3b are characterized with a small amount allocated for the HEI. Most of the projects have a short period, e. g. in the range of 3 months. The only mentioned big project is the one for the new dormitory.

Teachers and associates take part in national and international conferences.

Teaching staff of HEI participated in 97 national and international conferences in different stages. Teachers of the HEI are also involved in editorial board of the Practical management Journal.

The number of projects and activities that show the recognition of the HEI activities can be seen as minimum.

Teachers and associates are members of professional organisations and editorial boards of journals.

The HEI is an affiliate of the UNWTO which is an organization that serves as platform for cooperation between private and public sectors in the tourism industry. In the field of electrical engineering one employee is a senior member in the IEEE.

Recommendations for improvement
1. The activities of the teaching staff of the HEI are nationally oriented. The membership in different international organizations is indeed useful but specific activities are not mentioned. Therefore, it is recommended to extend the activities in an international context.
2. The number of publications should be also improved.

Quality grade
Minimum level of quality

5.4. Professional and/or scientific activities and achievements of the higher education institution improve teaching.

Analysis

The research equipment is used in teaching at undergraduate and graduate level.
The HEI is well-equipped with IT classrooms as well as with computers and workstations allowing students and teachers to carry out laboratory exercises and work with software and simulation tools.

The R&D centre is equipped with appropriate workstations and a set of components allowing the development of embedded solutions. The surface of the visited research centre is too small and should be increased. In order to be able to involve electrical engineering projects it is mandatory to increase the surface and add other appropriate equipment.

Scientific and professional literature is available. The access to online database (UNWTO, IEEE) represents a good basis to get scientific papers in English. This approach leads to the improvement of English skills of teaching staff and students.

Undergraduate and graduate students are involved in HEI's projects.
Students in undergraduate and graduate levels are involved in many projects. During the interviews teaching staff and students mentioned this issue several times.

The students are active stakeholders. Students have been considered as co-authors which is very useful for them to develop scientific and didactic skills. On the other side only projects in the tourism field are mentioned.

Students are involved in international competitions correlated to ERASMUS+. During the interviews it can be concluded that the duration for such activity is too short. Some students have only one week to participate in such events.

The higher education institution recognizes and rewards professional and/or scientific achievements of its employees.
The HEI encourages the teaching staff with the organization and funding of an English language course.

During the interviews it can be concluded that the college recognizes and rewards employees for their achievements. A procedure showing rules and steps to be awarded in order to increase transparently in this approach is not available.

Recommendations for improvement
1. The institution should introduce a transparent procedure with defined and appropriate rules for rewarding professors and teaching staff for their achievements. Rules should be focussed on international publications.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

APPENDICES

1. Quality assessment summary - tables

2. Site visit protocol

Quality grade by assessment area				
Assessment area	Unsatisfactory level of quality	Minimum level of quality	Satisfactory level of quality	High level of quality
I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution			X	
II. Study programmes			X	
III. Teaching process and student support			X	
IV. Teaching and institutional capacities			X	
V. Professional and/or scientific activity		X		

Quality grade by standard				
I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution	Unsatisfactory level of quality	Minimum level of quality	Satisfactory level of quality	High level of quality
1.1. The higher education institution has established a functional internal quality assurance system.			X	
1.2. The higher education institution implements recommendations for quality improvement from previous evaluations.		X		
1.3. The higher education institution supports academic integrity and freedom, prevents all types of unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination.			X	
1.4. The higher education institution ensures the availability of information on important aspects of its activities (teaching, professional and/or scientific and social role).			X	
1.5. The higher education institution understands and encourages the development of its social role.				X
1.6. Lifelong learning programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the strategic goals and the mission of the higher education institution, and social needs.		X		

Quality grade by standard				
II. Study programmes	*Unsatisfactory level of quality*	*Minimum level of quality*	*Satisfactory level of quality*	*High level of quality*
2.1. The general objectives of all study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution and the demands of the labour market.				X
2.2. The intended learning outcomes at the level of study programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the level and profile of qualifications gained.			X	
2.3. The higher education institution provides evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes it delivers.		X		
2.4. The HEI uses feedback from students, employers, professional organisations and alumni in the procedures of planning, proposing and approving new programmes, and revising or closing the existing programmes.			X	
2.5. The higher education institution ensures that ECTS allocation is adequate.		X		
2.6. Student practice is an integral part of the study programmes.			X	

Quality grade by standard				
III. Teaching process and student support	Unsatisfactory level of quality	Minimum level of quality	Satisfactory level of quality	High level of quality
3.1. Admission criteria or criteria for the continuation of studies are in line with the requirements of the study programme, clearly defined, published and consistently applied.			X	
3.2. The higher education institution gathers and analyses information on student progress and uses it to ensure the continuity and completion of study.		X		
3.3. The higher education institution ensures student-centred learning.			X	
3.4. The higher education institution ensures adequate student support.			X	
3.5. The higher education institution ensures support to students from vulnerable and under-represented groups.				X
3.6. The higher education institution allows students to gain international experience.		X		
3.7. The higher education institution ensures adequate study conditions for foreign students.		X		
3.8. The higher education institution ensures an objective and consistent evaluation and assessment of student achievements.		X		
3.9. The higher education institution issues diplomas and Diploma Supplements in accordance with the relevant regulations.				X
3.10. The higher education institution is committed to the employability of graduates.			X	

Quality grade by standard				
IV. Teaching and institutional capacities	Unsatisfactory level of quality	Minimum level of quality	Satisfactory level of quality	High level of quality
4.1. The higher education institution ensures adequate teaching capacities.			X	
4.2. The higher education institution ensures appropriate quality of external associates.			X	
4.3. Teacher recruitment, advancement and re-appointment is based on objective and transparent procedures, which include the evaluation of excellence			X	
4.4. The higher education institution provides support to teachers in their professional development.			X	
4.5. The space, equipment and the entire infrastructure (laboratories, IT service, work facilities etc.) are adequate for the delivery of the study programmes and ensure the achievement of intended learning outcomes and the implementation of professional and/or scientific activity.				X
4.6. The library and library equipment, as well as access to additional resources ensure the literature necessary for ensuring high-quality of study and scientific and teaching activity.			X	
4.7. The higher education institution rationally manages its financial resources.			X	

Quality grade by standard				
V. Professional and/or scientific activity	Unsatisfactory level of quality	Minimum level of quality	Satisfactory level of quality	High level of quality
5.1. Teachers and associates employed at the higher education institution are committed to the achievement of high quality and quantity of professional and/or scientific research.		X		
5.2. The higher education institution proves the social relevance of its professional and/or scientific research and transfer of knowledge.			X	
5.3. Professional and/or scientific achievements of the higher education institution have been recognized in the regional, national and international context.		X		
5.4. Professional and/or scientific activities and achievements of the higher education institution improve teaching.			X	

SITE VISIT PROTOCOL

	Monday, 6th May 2019
9:00	Gathering of the expert panel members in front of the ASHE building
9:00 – 10:30	Trip from Zagreb to Virovitica
11:00 – 14:00	Training for the expert panel members (short presentation of ASHE, introduction to the higher education system in Croatia, introduction to the re-accreditation procedure, standards for the evaluation of quality and writing the final report)
14:00 – 15:00	Working lunch
15:00 – 19:00	Preparation of the expert panel members for the site visit (working on the Self-evaluation report) Questions for the site visit

	Tuesday, 7th May 2019, Virovitica College
09:00 – 10:00	Meeting with the dean and vice deans
10:00 – 11:00	Internal meeting of the panel members (Document analysis)
11:00 – 12:00	Meeting with full-time teaching staff (members of the management are excluded)
12:00 – 13:00	Meeting with the students (open meeting for all students)
13:00 – 13:15	Internal meeting of the panel members
13:15 – 14:00	Meeting with external lecturers
14:00 – 15:30	Working lunch
15:30 – 16:15	Meeting with external stakeholders -representatives of professional organisations, business sector/industry sector, professional experts, non-governmental organisations
16:15 – 17:00	Organisation of additional meeting on open questions, if needed
17:30 – 20:00	Joint meeting of the expert panel members – reflection on the day and preparation for the second day of the site visit

	Wednesday 8th May 2019, Virovitica College
09:00 – 10:30	*Internal meeting of the panel members (document analysis)*
10:30 – 11:15	Meeting with the heads of: • Quality Management Centre • Student Standard Centre • Research and Development Centre • Centre for Library and Publishing Activity • ICT Support Centre and Erasmus Coordinator
11:15 – 11:45	Meeting with teaching assistants
11:45 – 14:00	Tour of the College (library, student services, IT rooms, lecture rooms, Research and Development Centre) and participation in teaching classes, tour of companies in which students do student practice • Blue Factory • The Entrepreneurial Incubator
14:00 – 15:00	*Working lunch*
15:00 – 15:30	Meeting with the alumni (which are not employees of the HEI)
15:30 – 16:00	Organisation of additional meeting on open questions, if needed
16:00 – 16:15	Exit meeting with Meeting with the dean and vice deans
17:00 – 21:00	Joint meeting of the expert panel members – Drafting the final report and working on the document Standards for the evaluation of quality

	Thursday, 9th May 2019
08:30 – 11:00	Drafting the final report
11:00 – 12:00	Lunch
12:00	Return to Zagreb

SUMMARY

The HEI has developed their own quality assurance system due to the dissatisfaction with ISO standards and procedures from the past. It is evident that HEI aims to achieve high quality standards but some of the prescribed standards are not exercised in practice. The HEI informs stakeholders via web sites and other reporting tools, but from the meeting with different stakeholder groups it is evident that they are not acquainted fully with the following: the pass rates, current criteria for creation of syllabuses, learning outcomes, Bloom's taxonomy as well as the methods of evaluation for each learning outcome, etc.

External lecturers are not involved continuously and sufficiently in development of programs and the HEI corporate culture creation. The HEI contributes to the development of the local community and local civil society by participating in the work of the Local Partnership for Employment of Virovitica Podravina County through appointed members. The HEI contributes to the foundations of the academic profession and accountability of teachers for the development of the HEI and the local community. There is however no development and revision of lifelong learning programmes as a result of a strategic decision.

All study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the HEI and correspond to the appropriate level of the Croatian Qualifications Framework. Some learning outcomes of the study programme must be changed so that they are measurable.

Although every teacher must perform constructive alignment of the learning outcomes at the level of courses before the beginning of an academic year, it is necessary to develop a system of evaluation that will prevent the successful completion of a course without achieving all learning outcomes (at least at the minimal level).

The process of determining the compliance of the ECTS credits and the actual student workload is new and requires its further development. Although the internship is mandatory to all the study programmes, it is necessary to develop the procedure for gathering and analysing feedback from students and employers on the quality of internship.

The criteria for admission to undergraduate and graduate studies are clear and available on the website and defined by the regulations. The HEI should conduct in-depth analyses of the reasons behind student attrition; additional measures are needed for reducing the student attrition and increasing the pass rate.

Various teaching methods are used in teaching, stimulating interactive and investigative learning, problem solving, and creative and critical thinking. Evaluation methods for the

defined learning outcomes are in line with the implemented teaching methods (e.g. written exams, seminars, project and homework assignments, essays, oral exams.).

HEI ensures accommodation, as well as scholarships from own funds, for students from vulnerable and under-represented groups.

Students have the opportunity to complete a part of their study or student internship abroad, through the Erasmus+ programme.

Teachers and associates at the HEI published papers and teaching materials. Most of them are categorized as professional. The mentioned number of published papers is very low and not appropriate for this kind of institution. The publication of teaching book in the field of electrical engineering has to be appreciated since this study program is quite new. This shows the engagement of the teacher.

Based on the self-evaluation report publishing activities are planned at the beginning of each study year. This approach is on one side advantageous since it represents a commitment of teachers and associates. On the other side there is no information about dealing with spontaneous publications.

A transparent procedure for encouragement and funding of publication activities is not available. The funding is rather based on "goodwill" of the dean.

During the interviews, a commitment of the Business councils to the HEI and its development is noticed. The tourism and economic fields are strongly represented. The field of information and communications technologies is still under development.

The HEI maintains a good relationship to incubators in the region. The relationship is based on involvement of student in internships. In order to be able to establish start-ups the relationship should more developed.

The support of research and transfer of knowledge and technologies is described with activities of teaching staff by participating in different events, e. g. workshops, conferences as well as with expert opinions. The specificity of the transfer of knowledge is not well justified. Activities are generic and not detailed.

Professional and scientific achievements of HEI have been recognized with different awards in different conferences for scientific and professional achievements as well as for consideration in best paper awards. The number of awards is not appropriate.

The number of projects and activities that show the recognition of the HEI activities can be seen as minimal.

The R&D centre is equipped with appropriate workstations and a set of components allowing the development of embedded solutions. The surface of the visited research centre is too small and should be increased.

During the interviews it can be concluded that the college recognizes and rewards employees for their achievements. A procedure showing rules and steps to be awarded in order to increase transparently in this approach is not available.

Summarizing we recommend strongly to follow up on the recommendations of the earlier accreditation panel and also on the recommendations given by this panel. In a globalizing world and Croatia being member of the EU, it is important that the HEI makes steps to become part of this international knowledge infrastructure. Students will benefit greatly from it and what is more it will create opportunities for students to stay in Croatia and counter the brain drain that is occurring at the moment. With high unemployment rates in the region it is also very important to contribute to regional development otherwise the region will fall into a negative spiral which may lead to de-population. This is happening in many areas throughout Europe, leading to unemployment, schools closing down, local SME's moving out of the region and young people looking for alternative places to study. This at all costs must be prevented.